

# The Clearing House

*A journal for modern junior and senior high schools*

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## THE CLEARING HOUSE

*A journal for modern junior and senior high schools*

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# What to Use Instead of MORAL INDIGNATION

*A plan for handling behavior cases in your school*

By WILLARD BEECHER

IN SPITE OF the discoveries of investigators in the field of psychology, problems of "cheating", "stealing", "lying", and similar asocial traits of behavior are still attacked by "moral indignation" and retaliatory punishments. For a hundred years or more the insane and feeble-minded were put in jails as criminals. How long, one wonders, will "educators" follow a similar myopic policy in dealing with unsocial traits as they arise in the classroom?

Punishment is the tool of the ignorant. When we know of no constructive way to improve behavior (to make it more social) we invoke "moral wrath" to justify the cruelty and humiliation we are determined

to heap upon the "offender". Physical pain, deprivation, humiliation, and fear are the "educational measures" we still use to block such unsocial tendencies.

The inadequacy of such "methods" is evident in the size and number of our jails and the tax-bill we pay for police "protection" and criminal courts. But our feeling of "moral superiority" to our victim is such a heady wine that we hate to lay it aside to consider him as a fellow human being who is seeking answers to social problems in a mistaken direction.

A typical case of what too often happens occurred when a boy reported the disappearance of his wrist watch. It was found to be in the possession of a classmate. His homeroom teacher flew into a "moral rage" and planned a series of humiliations including public exposure as a "thief", "telling the parents", deprivation of privileges, etc., which would "teach" John not to steal!

Had she been allowed to go ahead with her plans, John would have learned only the disadvantages of *being caught stealing* and have known nothing of why he stole in the first place. The teacher put up a strong resistance against any solution of the problem which did not inflict pain or humiliation on the "offender", believing that she was "neglecting her moral duty" to the

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *We published this paragraph in "The Educational Whirl" for September: "It is harder to search for the reasons for wrong doing than to punish the wrong doer. Which pays the greater educational dividends?" In this article, the author, a consulting school psychologist, explains a common-sense technique of dealing with the reasons for unsocial behavior. He shows his method in operation in the case of John, who had stolen a watch, but luckily was rescued from the hands of a teacher bent on retaliation.*

boy. The only thing she could see in the situation was that the boy had "taken" something.

Was there anything else she could have seen? There was plenty to see, but she did not consider the total situation of the boy or relate it in any way to the stealing. John was in the seventh grade but he was a very poor reader. He was ashamed of his apparent "stupidity" and tried to hide the facts as much as possible. Since he felt "put back" and inferior in academic fields (deprived of success) he tried to gain recognition in sports, painting, and predatory exploits aimed at "showing off".

No one can endure a position of "permanent inferiority" without an effort to *appear significant* in some other direction less "blocked". Boasting, stealing, and lying are helpful as a "detour" when a child feels unable to compete in "legitimate" endeavours. A child who cannot "go ahead" with others feels "deprived and impoverished". It is only natural that he will be inclined to "take" something to "make up" for what he *feels he lacks*.

Our effort, then, must be to remove the "block" which keeps him from legitimate success so that his discouragement will not tempt him to employ detours toward the "semblance of superiority".

Closer investigation disclosed the fact that John was born "left-sided" and that his eye-movements across a page were (by nature) from right to left. (Right-sided individuals naturally move their eyes from left to right.) He had not caught on to the "trick" of reading because neither he nor his teachers had been aware of this difficulty. He came to be "labeled" as slow and stupid, and with such labels came all the "loss of face" which "classroom society" heaps upon those who cannot "keep up" in such a highly competitive environment. The discouraged boy had no choice but to restore his sense of face by detours.

It was necessary to assure John that he too was a "valid" member of society and

not an "inferior". He was shown how his eyes were the source of his "reading failures" rather than "stupidity" as he had been allowed to believe. By following a pointer as it was moved across the printed lines his eyes were re-trained and he learned to read within a few months. When *he* discovered that he could succeed in "legitimate" activities he had *no use* for his former, more difficult detours.

Stealing, lying, cheating and other asocial behavior traits are *distress signals* from a ship-wrecked individual. These manifestations are *symptoms* of deep discouragement; the cry of one who has not the courage to try longer in a constructive direction. When a person has measles, a doctor does not prescribe cold cream and face powder to hide them; he builds up the whole body to fight the disease. But our "witch doctor" teachers are still trying to remove the symptoms of fear and discouragement by making pupils more fearful and discouraged (punishment).

Most of our disasters arise from our neurotic insistence on "perfection". (Though we may no longer rate on a 100% basis or give grade-cards, we have not given up the ideal of 100% as a goal.) The classroom stinks of competition and competitive attitudes fostered by the notion that we ought to "strive to be perfect in all things".

While this exists as an unrecognized though basic philosophy, children will "grade" one another on the basis of performance. The result will be that the "fast" ones will become arrogant and the "slow" ones will have to protect their pride in whatever way they can.

Who among us has not lied, boasted, cheated or stolen at some time in his life? Perhaps that is why we can get into such a fine moral frenzy about such matters. There are two kinds of lies—those which make us "appear taller" and those which protect us from attack. And as for "cheating"—if "winning" or "getting 100%" is held up as a necessary condition for "keeping face", we



are pretty sure to do a little bit of hedging ourselves.

We are assured that only God is perfect. If we believe that, why do we keep nudging Him to move over so we can sit on the same seat? Our present insistence on "mistakelessness" in classrooms is an inhuman burden for the tender shoulders of children to bear. As long as we keep this "ideal" of 100% and the goad of "competition" to

spur us toward it, we ought not to become "morally indignant" if we encounter the detours to that goal—boasting, cheating, stealing and lying.

Let the classroom teacher, then, beware of using force and fear to remedy the results of fear (discouragement). There is no "rule of thumb" to "cure" stealing, etc.—surely not punishment. Punish if you must—but please do not call it "education".



## Here's How It Was in 1917—Remember?

The American child has been spared the horrors of bombardment, the unparalleled cruelties of this fiercest of all wars. But day after day the radio, the newspaper, the motion picture lay down a steady barrage of claims, counterclaims, and outright propaganda. . . .

All over the land, Little Boy Blue is stirring again, setting up his toy soldiers once more, after a slumber of twenty-five years. . . .

In April 1917 as Congress assembled to debate the fateful declaration of war, the pressure on the children of New York City was far more insistent, the crisis much more immediate. (This article was written some months ago.—Ed.)

As Congress opened, patriotic assemblies convoked in all the high schools, set the keynote. They called upon all students to rally to the cause, to spur their war effort. Upon them was impressed the awful solemnity of the hour. The response was prompt, ardent, vigorous. They rolled up record totals for sales of Liberty Bonds, War Savings Stamps, and Red Cross memberships. From the shops of the schools poured out the floats for street parades, the advertising booths for rapid-fire selling drives. . . .

Yet when America's food problem, too, became alarming, hundreds of boys were just as quick to respond. In school gardens or private plots, New York boys, among others, raised a good share of fruits and vegetables. Some traveled to Long Island truck farms under free transit, devoting evenings, afternoons, even week-ends to the emergency. . . .

And in the great Memorial Day preparedness parade of 1917 hundreds of thousands of school children passed by Governor Whitman's reviewing stand in a spectacular demonstration of City-wide patriotism. . . . In 1917 the New York State Military Training Act was amended to compel all boys from

16 to 19, at work or at school, to undergo compulsory military training. Overnight, teachers with military experience became drillmasters, whipping schoolboys into army material all over the City. . . . One group of students took matters into their own hands, formed riot squads of Vigilantes, and unceremoniously routed anyone who showed the slightest sign of disloyalty. . . .

From March 1917 to March 1919 over 20,000 rabidly anti-German pupils showed their contempt for all things Teutonic by dropping German, and commensurately swelling French classes by more than 6,000 and Spanish classes by over 12,000. . . .

If a student enlisted voluntarily, he was awarded his graduation diploma. In almost every one of the twenty high schools then in existence, enlistment campaigns were vigorously conducted. . . .

At the other extreme were the rebellious exponents of the "peace at any price" theory. To punish such dissidence in a Brooklyn high school an irate justice publicly demanded the immediate closing of the school. If a teacher encouraged such pacifism, his loyalty was at once suspect and often he was dismissed. . . .

It was the huge "New York City Schoolboy Army," training in the armories, and already remarkably adept in the strategy of war, that were the public's idols. With rifles furnished by the United States Army and the National Guard and smartly attired in khaki uniforms, they learned military tactics—camping, rifle shooting, sanitation, first aid, wall-scaling, wireless code, signalling, and other arts of war. In the Preparedness Day parade on May 30, 1917, thousands of boys shouldered rifles and marched lustily on, singing a new theme song, "Onward, Youth Soldiers". The boundaries of the schoolroom now extended as far as the Western front.—MORRIS SCHREIBER in *High Points*.

# THE "GRIPE" SESSION:

Here's a "Bill of Rights" for the homeroom,  
allowing "oppressed" pupils to air grievances

By ROBERT W. HALLETT

I HAVE BEEN accused of being undemocratic. I could hardly expect you to look upon this as an alarming revelation or even interesting enough, for that matter, to justify taking the time to read about my personal reactions to the accusation, unless I were a person of such importance that it could matter one way or the other. That is just the point; I am.

To some people I am so important that they seek my viewpoint on all sorts of questions and consider me an authority on nearly everything. When I express an opinion or render a judgment, they accept it as being well-nigh irrefutable. Very few dictators have more potential authority than I. I have the power to enforce obedience to rules of my own making, whether or not those who have to obey think them just or sensible. I can mete out punishment for the infraction of those rules and allow no redress of grievances unless I so wish.

I think I need go no further in proving my point. You must agree that I as a class-

room teacher am an extremely important person to my pupils, and that the matter of whether I am democratic in the exercise of my authority is of grave concern to them. You must also appreciate why I cannot take their criticism of me with quite the same degree of equanimity I would had it come from some other source. It is a part of my job to teach these pupils about democracy.

I have taken that job more seriously this year than ever before and have made a conscientious effort to inspire my pupils with the ideal that all forms of human association should be governed by the democratic principle. Now because of it I find myself in the embarrassing position of having my teaching explode in my face. It is very apparent to me now why rulers who wish to keep their authority absolute first of all keep their subjects in ignorance. Education can be a dangerous boomerang, it seems.

It appears that I made my mistake in teaching my homeroom pupils about the Bill of Rights, for it was here that they claimed a point of difference in what I practiced and what I preached. I say "they" when actually it was only one of them who made the discovery, but so immediately did he receive the support of the others that I think of it in terms of a mass uprising.

They contended that since I was continually preaching on the subject of good citizenship and reminding them of their duties and obligations as citizens of the school, I ought also to take into consideration that there are rights and privileges which go with citizenship in a democracy. First and

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EDITOR'S NOTE: Behind all of the scheduled discussions that take place in homerooms, are pupils harboring resentments and irritations about school matters which can't be voiced to the student council or to the principal? You might be surprised at some of the things that the pupils would bring up if they were encouraged to talk freely in an occasional homeroom "Gripe Session" like the author's. Mr. Hallett teaches in Glenfield Junior High School, Montclair, N.J.

foremost of these is the right of free speech and the privilege of criticizing governmental policy.

I tried to point out that they had these rights through their student government organization, consisting of a council to which they sent an elected representative charged with the responsibility of reporting their complaints, but this didn't seem to settle the question satisfactorily. They didn't quite know how to express it (or more likely they didn't dare), but I intuitively arrived at the conclusion that they felt there were restrictions to the type of problem this machinery was intended to solve. They seemed to consider that it was fine for solving problems which involved the pupils' relationship to the school as a group, but not as individuals.

I reminded them that they always had access to the principal's office for consultation on important individual problems and to their homeroom teacher for those of a more trivial nature. There, it seems, "was the rub". They felt restricted in their right to register complaints with authority directly on matters which might be critical of that authority.

I must confess they were right when it came to me, who as their homeroom teacher represented their most immediate contact with the authority of the school and who more or less furnished them with the clue as to what the teacher-pupil relationship should be. I qualify my confession, however, to the extent that I did not reject their right to criticize me. Even so, I did not provide the opportunity or establish a relationship whereby they would feel free to do so.

In other words, I am not undemocratic in my philosophy, but I am in my practice. Not an unusual occurrence these days, I admit, but somehow I take it more seriously when it happens to youngsters who haven't yet cultivated the adult aptitude for rationalizing when they detect a slight odor of hypocrisy.

It is one thing to recognize and admit a failure, but quite another to rectify it. As I saw it, some of the traditional barriers in the teacher-pupil relationship would have to be broken down before a really democratic situation could exist, but I was puzzled to know just how far this would be safe or expedient. Would discipline and control suffer if the pupils were given the privilege of speaking their minds freely? Would respect for authority be compromised if it were open to criticism? I certainly have all the faith in the world in human nature and believe in its improbability, but I include the intelligent use of democracy in the list of those things which "have to be taught, not caught". So I figured that even though my ground was fertile, it would need a little preparation before sowing the seeds of democracy.

It didn't take a great deal of discussion for the group to see that democracy has a social as well as an individual significance; that while it extends a great many rights and liberties to the individual, it also places in the interests of common welfare certain well-defined limits and restrictions as to how they may be used; that authority derived from the democratic process is never immune to criticism, is, nevertheless, entitled to respect and obedience.

Translating these conditions into terms of their own school experience, my young group saw, I believe, the reason why a pupil, even if given all the rights of democratic citizenship, could hardly speak freely whenever he felt so inclined, or criticize his teachers and classmates without regard for time, place and manner, or disregard rules simply because he felt them unjust to him.

When I felt that understanding of these conditions was clear enough to assure their acceptance, we were ready to discuss the more positive side of the picture. Where and how should democratic privileges be expressed?

As an answer to this question we have

turned some of our weekly homeroom meetings into what is popularly known as a "Gripe Session". The youngsters have come to know that here they can take the lid off their repressions and "gripe" about anything or everything, real or fancied, that they feel exists. A good cross-sectional view of the topics or the manner in which they are presented could be obtained from the Letters-to-the-Editor page of our newspapers.

I could very well conclude this account of our experiment in democracy at this point and say the problem had been solved. The pupils wanted freedom of speech and they have it. They wanted the opportunity to criticize authority and it has been given. They accused me of being undemocratic; I accepted their challenge and everyone is happy. But so what?

To prove the real worth of democracy, as I see it, is not merely to prove that it can be made the basis of any form of human relationship, but rather to bring proof that by it results are reached that would be possible by no other means. If this be true, then you are perfectly justified in questioning, first, if anything worthwhile has been accomplished as the result of our experiment, and if so, if it could not have been done as well by a more conventional type of educational procedure. My answers would be yes and no, respectively, to these questions.

If I recognize the teacher's responsibility of trying to help a pupil to think straight, I first of all ought to know how he thinks and why. If he is thinking incorrectly I must first find it out, and then do everything possible to get him on the right track. A wealth of opportunities for finding out what is on a pupil's mind has been afforded to me during the uninhibited expression of the gripe session. These opportunities, I am convinced, would never have been presented in the more formal classroom situations.

For instance, I have discovered from the

"gripings" of my pupils dozens of resentments that are held under concealment and are never expressed except in the form of an unhealthy attitude toward the teachers, the school, or the world in general. It apparently makes no difference whether there is a valid cause behind these resentments or whether they are simply the result of a misapprehension or distortion of facts. They are there and may bring trouble until the cause is removed, the misunderstanding cleared up, or the reasoning straightened out. I am no psychologist, but I have certainly had a lot of experience this year in trying to be just that.

To enumerate a few instances of what I mean, let me take the case of my Negro pupils who believed that the school considered them inferior to the white pupils. This is absolutely absurd from the standpoint of truth, since our particular school leans over backwards in its attempts to avoid this very situation. Unfortunately, however, the mere truth of the matter was not enough by itself; the important thing was to make these pupils see it.

I also found considerable resentment over the school's method of sectioning grades into homogeneous groups on the basis of learning speed. The slow-learning pupil, I found, was very apt to feel himself the object of discrimination, until he was shown how the system works to his advantage.

Then there were the pupils who felt themselves "picked on" by their teachers or classmates. Here it became a matter of individual guidance in trying to discover the personality or behavior characteristics which were bringing down upon them universal social disapproval.

Finally, there were those who thought themselves "gypped" because the school had not provided more paid entertainment in the special assemblies. A little simple arithmetic was sufficient for them to see they had received more than their money's worth in return for their contribution to the Special Assembly Fund.



These are only a few examples, but they are quite representative of what the youngsters had to complain about. To a casual observer they may seem trivial or unimportant, but to an adolescent they certainly are not.

I must admit that not always were the pupils' complaints without foundation or their opinions based on lack of knowledge or of the correct interpretation of facts. All too frequently they had real grounds and justification behind them. If so, we took cooperative steps to do something about it, and often succeeded. I say "often", for many times there were things beyond our control or power to remedy. As an example of a problem which we handled to the mutual satisfaction and advantage of all sides concerned, I cite the following incident:

A parent made a visit to school to see me one morning, and arrived during the middle of a teaching period. She complicated matters further by insisting upon holding our conference in the hall, which meant leaving the class to take care of itself. On this occasion they made such a bad job of it that I announced there would be an extra session after school that day for a lesson in manners. I held the whole class responsible, for I thought from the sound of things that the disturbance had been general enough to warrant it.

I am sure that such instances are commonplace enough so that I might be forgiven by most teachers for dismissing it at the time as being of little importance and thinking no more about it. Not so, it seems, with the youngsters. I have learned since that if there is one thing a child resents most, it is being punished for something he didn't do. It isn't so much the punishment that counts, but "the principle of the thing". I learned this during the "gripe session" which followed a few days after the episode.

The group had evidently prepared for it, as the spokesman who presented their case did a job much too well polished for it

to have been wholly impromptu. She came directly to the point, which in substance was that seldom is everyone in a class at fault, and therefore it is highly unfair for a teacher to punish the innocent as well as the guilty.

I had to admit that she was right. Very lamely, I am afraid, I tried to justify myself on the grounds that sometimes a teacher has no way of knowing who are the sheep and who the goats, that often the innocent many have had to suffer for the sins of the few, that, unfortunately, this is the way of the world, and that since I didn't know the answer, I was certainly ready to listen to suggestions.

The first was the very unoriginal one that the teacher appoint a monitor to take charge in his absence and report the wrong-doers. This didn't get very far, for the group agreed that the position of the informer was never enviable, and therefore no one would relish the job. We seemed to have arrived at an impasse. One of the girls, however, saved the day by a process of reasoning which I like to believe was inspired by our discussions of democracy. In any case it was surprisingly sound for a youngster. Her idea, in effect, was as follows:

There are always people who can never take care of themselves, and therefore since other people suffer by reason of the fact, it is up to those innocent people to take steps to protect themselves. In this case it was only obvious that someone would have to be in charge during the teacher's absence.

That person, it seemed to her, should be their class president. The class had elected him, so why couldn't they, instead of the teacher, give him this additional authority? If he were so delegated, he wouldn't be "tattling" when he passed on for punishment those who were causing the trouble, but rather simply doing the duty for which the group had made him responsible. This would be fair to everyone: the teacher, the class and the president.

The only ones who wouldn't like it probably would be those who were most apt to cause the trouble, and they didn't count since they weren't "playing fair" anyway. (This last observation was certainly a political master-stroke in stifling the opposition.)

Needless to say, the result of the voting was unanimously in favor of the proposal, so it was put into action and worked out very well.

In fact, the whole experiment with the "Gripe Session" has, in my estimation, succeeded. I have not noticed any loss of respect for me or my authority; on the contrary, I have observed a greater willingness to accept it. As for control, there have been

greater opportunities for the group to share it. This, in my mind, is the thing we are all aiming at in education for democracy.

From my personal point of view I am a better teacher, for I have gained in the ability to see things as the youngsters see them and to examine my actions with a regard for their sense of values as well as my own.

From the pupils' point of view there is an appreciation for the respect shown to their individuality in giving serious consideration to their stated grievances.

From the educational point of view, I sincerely believe the experiment has been a valuable lesson in the meaning of democracy.



## A School-Day Work Program for Pupils —Six Suggestions

Regardless of which nation loses the war, there is going to be a world depression far greater than we have ever seen before. Many more people will be fighting for food, clothing, and shelter. Prices will go higher with resultant lowering of the standard of living for many more people. That means a greater number of people will have to start with available raw materials in their community and convert them into food, clothing, and shelter. But how can youths do this, if they have never been taught to do it? We must teach more people how to live by the use of their hands. . . .

Every girl should start with Home Economics. The entire lunch service of the school should be provided not by WPA or NYA but by the boys and girls of the school.

We have to clean our homes. Most of the cleaning of our comprehensive high schools should be done by the students. They make the buildings dirty. They should learn to clean them. Some parents will say they do not send their girls to school to wash windows but many more of our girls need to learn how and to wash windows. Boys and girls both need to wash the furniture, dry, polish and wax it a regular intervals. Methods learned in school will carry over into the home.

Barber shops and beauty parlors do a thriving business today. Yet how many long-haired boys and straight-haired girls do we have in our classrooms? There is room in every high school for at least one barber, one beauty operator, and one bootblack, to say nothing of a practical nurse and assistant librarians. . . .

More of our girls should be taught to sew. Every high school should have its sewing room where the girls would make not only clothing for themselves and their families but for the Red Cross and other social agencies. . . .

Our boys and girls must learn to make things with their hands in the school and from native materials. Surveys need to be made to find what materials are available. Home and community crafts are needed to convert these materials into consumer goods. . . .

Of course the schools should operate on a twelve-month basis. Much canning, preserving, etc., could be done then. School camps must be established for health building as well as work instruction. City children would go to the school camps during the summer. They might alternate camp life with shop instruction or work.—C. W. MILLER in *Virginia Journal of Education*.

# The Rochester Unit on SOCIAL CHANGE

By

STILLMAN M. HOBBS

IF THERE IS one basic concept concerning the nature of society which the study of the social sciences bears out, it is the inevitability of social change. Since all people must operate to a greater or less degree within the framework of the institutions which make up human society, and are affected for better or for worse by every change which occurs in that society, it behooves us as teachers to acquaint our pupils with the essential nature, causes and potentialities of changes in the social structure in which they live. These changes take place in every area of life, and in some manner influence the living of all of us directly or indirectly.

In Rochester a unit on social change is included in our 12th-grade social-studies course on "Modern Political and Social Problems". To give some impression of the "raison d'être" of this unit, it might be well to quote from its introduction:

"This unit is based upon the fact that social change is a universal characteristic of life and culture. It becomes especially necessary for the members of a dynamic society to know this principle and accustom themselves to its truth. The viewpoint expressed

is frankly that social change, within limits, may be taken in hand by a culture and consciously directed to the goals envisioned by that society".

The major objectives of this unit follow:

To help pupils see that change, whether for good or ill, is a constant factor and must be intelligently accepted.

To evaluate the methods of social change.

To help create a vision of the possibility of continuous improvement in the life of man.

How do we seek to attain these objectives in actual practice? What do the pupils do? How do they react to the various activities? What do we feel they get from the study of this unit? This article will be concerned mainly with a discussion of these pertinent questions.

The social change unit combines the cumulative knowledge gained in previous social-studies courses, since all history and study of human institutions reveal the inevitability of change; it also gives a working basis for attacking the other problems which appear in this twelfth-year course. So the unit is a sort of Janus, looking both backward and forward. It presents a happy opportunity to use previous study and knowledge to build up the case and buttress the facts for the constant factor of social change, and also, by emphasis and intensity of treatment in this one unit, makes possible the use of a learned concept in the solving of future problems of society.

Some of the activities in which we invite the pupils to engage while studying the first problem of the unit—"Why is social change necessary?"—will reveal the use of historical

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *Here is the unit on Social Change as taught in the 12th grade of Franklin High School, Rochester, N.Y., where the author is head of the social-studies department. Readers are referred to "Social Change: High Schools Must Prepare Pupils for Accelerating Trends", by Warren W. Coxe, in the November issue of THE CLEARING HOUSE.*

perspective gained in previous studies. Many examples of these activities could be given; those which follow are typical:

1. "Describe and illustrate how institutions of today have grown out of individual and group practices of the past." The historical possibilities here are obviously infinite. Pupils often trace the evolution of the family, the state, law, religion, or trade. This exercise offers excellent evidence of the historical veracity of the concept of social change. It sets the stage for the understanding of the idea that human institutions have arisen because of the needs of human beings in certain areas of life, and gives some basis for the future evaluation of institutional practices in terms of the needs of human beings.

2. "What is meant by biological evolution? By social evolution? Does the latter mean that all institutions—government, family, religion, economic practices, education, etc., are still in the process of change and will continue to change in the future?" This activity attempts to make clear in the minds of the pupils the fact that there is a law of social evolution as well as of organic evolution, and to impress upon them the idea of change as a constant in all spheres of life—past, present, and future.

3. "Because a practice is old is no reason to defend or condemn it. Do you agree? Why?" In considering this question the pupils have the opportunity to analyze the worth of human institutional practices from the pragmatic point of view. It should uproot a number of misconceptions based on custom, tradition, or the conservatism of vested interests intent on maintaining the "status quo".

4. "Make a list of those aspects of American culture which make it *dynamic*, not *static*. (Consult references on the development of modern science and industrialism.) Be prepared to show how each item is capable of affecting several of our institutions." Here the fundamental difference between a dynamic and a static society is stressed,

with the American scene being used as the basis for study.

In the course of this activity pupils gain some revealing glimpses of the far-reaching social and economic effects on millions of people. They may result from changes in a single area of life (Example, the invention of the cotton-picker). A study of the dynamic nature of American government offers most interesting possibilities as pupils trace the evolution of the concept of the role of government. Certainly TVA, AAA, and CCC, dedicated to the benefit of the people by a government which feels obligations to its people in such matters as conservation, farm prices, and unemployed youth, are far removed from the early Jeffersonian concept of a government whose activities should not exceed the primary function of restraining one man from injuring another.

In matters cultural it is readily apparent that government took unto itself a new province with its sponsorship of the Federal Writers' Project, the Federal Theatre Project, and the Mellon Institute of Art.

The dynamics of economic thought is brought to light in tracing the evolution of our banking system from the Hamiltonian idea of a system intended primarily to benefit men of huge wealth and enterprise to the F.D.I.C., which operates to insure the deposits of the modest depositor of \$5000 or less.

5. "The population increase of the United States is slowing down. This means that if continued in the future we shall have stationary numbers with a relatively larger percentage of older people and a smaller percentage of young people. How is this fact likely to affect the following institutions: education, government, manufacturing industries, the standard of living, the practice of medicine, real estate markets, etc?" A consideration of this problem touches upon a trend in society whose implications it is essential for us to begin to understand and be prepared for.



6. "Define and illustrate cultural lag. It is caused by the large numbers of persons affected by institutional changes and by the conservative nature of our emotional attitudes in relation to customs and traditions. Can you explain this emotional conservatism?"

An awareness of cultural lag in matters affecting society explains many of the dislocations of history and helps to develop in pupils a desire to eliminate or to lessen that lag in the future. The influence of vested interests which stand to profit by maintaining things as they are, even though society in general is harmed, is also brought out in this activity. The dangers of holding an emotional and traditional neo-piety regarding changes in cherished institutions are of necessity matters for concern in discussing this question.

Some activities which we use for bringing about an understanding of Problem 2—"What are the methods of social reform?"—may be interesting to the reader.

1. "Explain revolution and evolution. Contrast these methods by studying the American Revolution, French Revolution, Russian Revolution, or the American Civil War, and the growth of Canadian self-government, the growth of democracy in England, Denmark, and Sweden, or the increasing regulation of big business in America.

"Try to identify the various stages or steps in thought and action through which change occurs by each method. Can it be argued that all revolutions have no constructive results? In each case of revolution studied, were the outcomes justified? Why is evolution generally preferable as a method?"

All of these questions require a fundamental understanding of the general characteristics, concomitants and results of the evolutionary as contrasted with the revolutionary concept of social change. It tests the pupils' skill at analysis and appraisal of two basic social processes which are the

only avenues to social change or progress.

2. "Why did the Fathers of the Constitution make provision for its amendment? If evolution seems generally too slow, can anything be done to hasten evolutionary processes?" In working out this question the pupil must be resourceful in discerning means of hastening the evolutionary process.

3. "What are the causes of violent revolutions? Through what stages does a revolution pass? What is the danger involved in disorder which accompanies or follows revolutionary turmoil? For the latter, read a description of the causes leading to the seizure of power by Mussolini or Hitler." This activity involves an understanding of the life history of revolutions. It should create an awareness of the pitfalls and dangers inherent in the revolutionary process, and hence bring about a more scientific attitude concerning social progress, with evolutionary procedure as the desired practice. A study of the rise of Hitler and Mussolini is especially pertinent at this moment in history.

4. "If social change is inevitable, does that mean that nothing can be done about the particular direction in which change moves, or the speed of change? Do you think it possible that social change might be taken in hand by a culture and consciously directed?" This question of course offers the crux of the whole study of social change, for it offers the idea of a conscious direction of social change for the benefit of human beings.

One other activity should be mentioned which illustrates the inclusive and purposeful nature of the study of this unit on social change. To quote again from the unit itself:

"This entire unit may be used as a framework for the study of any one or several American problems in which you may be interested. Some possibilities are housing, social security, conservation, extension of civil service, improved national health, labor and unemployment, etc. This unit may

also be used as an approach to and aid in studying any other unit in this course. In either case, these aspects of the present unit should be stressed:

1. What are the conditions in our society today that are so grave as to affect the national welfare and constitute a problem?

2. What remedies are suggested for a solution?

3. Do these remedies promise the desired reform, or will they incur further problems without meeting the fundamental situation?

4. What persons and groups are working for, and which ones are against the proposed remedies? What are the motives on both sides?

5. Do the most promising of the proposed remedies appear to be more or less inevitable changes which are reasonably in line with American tradition, or are they entirely contrary to our culture?"

Having described briefly some of the reading and research activities which the pupils engage in, let us now consider two or three activities of a more diverse and extensive character.

One class made a study of the economic system of the United States from the earliest times to the present. This of course necessitated the usual book work, reading reports, and discussion as a prerequisite for understanding. An analysis of some of the discrepancies in our system of distribution and the position of the consumer led to a consideration of the consumers' cooperative movement. The class became vitally interested and planned a first-hand visit to a local cooperative store.

The pupils arranged the trip, worked out a schedule of the things which they were to explore on their visit, and prepared themselves with a list of questions to ask the store manager. A meaningful photographic record of the trip was taken by one of the pupils; a group wrote up an account of their experiences, and several class discus-

sions were motivated by the visit. The pupils were enthusiastic, yet critical. The teacher felt that the group had gained much in understanding of such matters as the role of the middle-man and the status of the ordinary retail store compared with that of the cooperative, that they had gained an appreciation of the consumers' problems and some sense of the possibilities of the cooperative movement in the United States.

The same class sponsored an exhibit of housing conditions in Rochester which had been prepared by a committee of Rochester citizens interested in the local housing problem. The exhibit was arranged entirely by the pupils, and all of the social-studies classes in the school were invited to attend it. Pictures which showed the urgent need for better local housing were displayed; maps, graphs and charts were used and explained by the pupils in charge; and contrasts were made between the actual conditions and what they should be from a social point of view. After seeing the exhibit, visiting classes viewed a sound film on housing as a problem in a typical American city.

Another class made a comprehensive map of our local community to illustrate the existence of cultural lags in certain areas of the city. They covered such matters as poverty, crime, juvenile delinquency, high incidence of disease, high death rate, etc. Attempts were made to suggest how these problems could be alleviated. There were recommendations for fair treatment of the foreign born, elimination of unemployment, the establishment of adequate medical clinics and health facilities, and provision for additional parks and playgrounds.

Many other activities could be described. We trust that the few mentioned in this article will adequately explain what we are trying to do in helping our pupils to sense the inevitability of social change and in instilling in them a desire and a determination to guide those changes in the most socially-desirable directions.

# OBSERVATIONS *of a* Superintendent's Daughter

By NORMA LEA QUARLES

THEY BEGIN to come around every year just about the time when the flowers are beginning to pop open and show their ruffled, lacy petticoats, the trees have put new wax on their young green leaves, and new life is surging through us all. They make their appearance from early spring until late August. By that time they begin to have a desperate look in their eyes. I am referring to that new crop of embryonic teachers pouring forth from our colleges and universities.

They are all prepared to tell these uncouth, ignorant little lads and lassies such as I all about the cruel, cruel world and how to solve its problems. Far be it from me to even hint that these "sophisticated Socrates of modern America" are on an average approximately four years older than the seniors of next year—and I sometimes wonder if we are not older at times.

Perhaps I am one of those young cynics that all professors warn their proteges

about before they leave their classrooms. On the other hand, maybe I am a realist—I haven't decided yet. I know that I am a pudgy sixteen-year-old with a very saucy nose and hands that are always too big. Add a very generous dose of freckles and reddish hair with the temper that goes with it and behold—that's I. I also possess a notion for the curious and perhaps that is the reason for this article, because if I had not taken an interest in all those funny-looking people that come to the door and ask if my father is busy, this would never have been written.

For instance, there is Miss Local Dame. Miss Dame is a sweet little girl who is very active in the local church and made rather high grades in the schools she has attended. She is quite tiny and submissive. Her mother or father usually accompanies her.

The interview is progressing nicely, and from my corner I am surprised. (Of course, I am absorbed in a book, or a piece of string, or the chair legs.) She is even convincing me until Wham! into the picture comes the girl's parent.

"Tell him about your wonderful grades in psychology, and show him those nice letters of recommendation. Now Mr. J, how much money does the job pay?"

I utter an undistinguishable "Fool" and walk out with my string. Why did the poor Dame bring along her parent in the first place, to fan her brow if she should faint? Who will do the teaching—she or her mother? Even though she did make good grades in psychology, she won't teach *that* to fifth graders and she is not the type who will even use it. And those letters of recom-

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *After reading this article, we glanced nervously around, to be sure no superintendent's daughter was observing us. Miss Quarles wrote this article last spring, when she was 16 years old and a junior in Ash Grove, Mo., High School, where her father is superintendent of schools. We seem to picture Miss Quarles as a girl with relentless, unmoving eyes, no illusions about anything whatever, and a belief that everybody is vulnerable somewhere. She says she is pudgy, freckled, and saucy-nosed. But don't let her disarm you like that, while she looks for a place to sink the knife.*

mendation—anyone can read them with his eyes closed. Well, good luck, Local Dame, to you and your mother.

Last Wednesday afternoon I was contentedly making my crow's feet and Jacob's ladders when a young man made his appearance at the front door. I went to meet him. He was slightly embarrassed. I could tell that this interview had been carefully planned and I didn't enter into the picture.

"Uh—hello there," he said very smoothly. Then he cleared his throat and looked sterner, remembering that I was one of his prospective pupils. I ushered him into the "tomb". My wise father had just gone out to the school building for a few minutes.

I was settling into my corner with my string when the realization suddenly hit me that I was going to have to entertain this guy until my father returned. I explained this to my visitor and ended up with what was supposed to have been a quip. We both laughed—it sounded like when you come to the end of an ice cream soda: a zurp at the lower end of the straw. I asked him what college he attended and what his major was. I learned that it was commerce. I told him about my own nightmarish experience with shorthand. He murmured a bored "Is that so?" "Oh really?" "Well", and stared at the wall. I craned my neck around the bookcase to see what he was staring at. I didn't see anything but a bare wall.

I wiggled down deeper into my chair and cleared my throat. I asked him as a last resort if he attended many basketball games. Immediately a new glint came into his eyes.

"Oh yes, say, did you see the one State played against Teachers?" I assured him that I had and mentioned a few incidents of the game. I remembered it vividly, thank goodness. In thirty minutes he was down on the floor diagramming the plays used by each team and I was down on my hands and knees with him, using my fingers for players, and we played the game all over

again. When my father came he found us in this position.

I introduced the flustered young man to my perplexed father. I told him that our visitor was applying for the commercial position. Again that old dull glint came into the young man's eyes and he started mumbling in monotones. Again I took my string and quietly left. Another square peg in a round hole.

And then there's the one who was applying for the coaching position. He was a hot-shot in college, star on the basketball team, head of his fraternity, editor of the college publication, and very popular on the campus. He wore a tweed suit that needed pressing badly, a bow tie, a pork pie hat, and striped socks. He breezed into the room reeking of hair oil and tobacco. He smoked three cigarettes and filled his pipe once during the interview, even though Daddy carefully explained that boys on the basketball and football teams were not allowed to smoke. He laughed egotistically and talked about the virtues of his Alma Mater, what *He* thought about government, politics and war.

I didn't even bother to take my string with me when I stalked out of the room. I knew that I would need it again when the next person came to apply for the coaching position.

A few days passed peacefully enough. I was just beginning to breathe a little deeper when I heard a none-too-gentle rap at the door. I could tell at a glance that it was Another One. My father had gone to the local post office to inquire about a special delivery letter or something. It's uncanny how that man can sense the presence of a prospective teacher within the radius of three miles. Maybe it's intuition. I wouldn't know. I know that he leaves and I usually get hooked.

Well, I was on the spot again. This one was another lady. Did I say "lady"? I couldn't be sure, I just saw a red haze. I blinked my eyes to get them accustomed to



so much color. She had blood-red fingertips and scarlet lips and cheeks. Obviously she had put her paint on in the dark, for it covered her entire face. She adopted a vinegary expression (force of habit) when she saw me. I knew that her war paint was one strike against her with my father. He has expressed his views on the subject in my presence and for my benefit, often.

The woman was old, even though her hair was jet-black. She wore a very thin blouse and a very short skirt. She was as cheap-looking as a lighted electric bulb on a sunshiny day. I didn't even try to talk to her. She was doing enough for the two of us.

She explained to me, among other things, that she didn't like a small town, could hardly stand it, but she guessed she could stand anything. I politely asked her what city she was from. I supposed that a town the size of ours was considered a small city—not exactly a hick town at least. I could imagine that she would be dreadfully lost without the bustle and noise of the city.

"Oh, I come from Nevada, Missouri. Lived there all my life."

When my father came she asked me to do her a favor. I obliged.

"Dear, I have Petey in the back of my car. Will you take him for a nice little walk?"

I gave her my most putrid smile and went to hunt "dear Petey", who turned out to be a toy terrier.

Yesterday the family was going to drive into the city not far away. We had on our hats and coats and were ready for Daddy to back the car out of the garage when Miss S descended upon us.

Miss S walked as if she were on eggs, her head on a stiff neck and her body about two steps behind her head. She was applying for music. She stared into space like a per-

son looking into a foreign land, and those who spoke to her waited until she came back to the United States to answer. You can imagine this interview.

I dragged out my string and started for my corner. My father told her there was no music vacancy and he knew of no prospective openings. She could, however, leave her written application on the table as she went out. She took off her coat at this announcement and mentioned the weather. Having finished the interview, my father was twirling his hat on his finger. Miss S had many problems and needed Daddy's advice on them all.

My sister came into the room and struggled into her coat. Miss S talked about clothes and how hard she was to fit. I could imagine the poor salesgirl's problem with this woman. My sister asked Daddy for the keys, saying that she would back the car out. Miss S wanted Daddy's advice about which make of car she should purchase this spring. Miss S became spellbound at a particularly difficult string trick I was doing. Miss S had a brother-in-law working in a string factory.

Finally Mother announced that she was ready to go and asked poor Daddy if he was ready. After several apologies (but mostly by main strength) we got Miss S out the door, and we went to the city—just two hours late. Miss S was forgotten quickly.

From these annual episodes I have decided that there's an art to everything, even applying for a job, and it needs cultivating.

Well, move over, fellows—I'll be right with you as soon as I get these four years of college out of the way. I'll teach until I have a car and a ratty fur coat. Then, if I run true to form, I'll pounce upon some poor unsuspecting male like a bird after a worm and that will end my teaching career. What a future!



She sits complacent at her desk and teaches all day long. She's never changed a method yet, for *how* could she be wrong?—LUCRETIA MONEY in *Mississippi Educational Advance*.

# VISIT THEIR HOMES:

Meeker Junior High School teachers run into difficulties—and gain advantages

By GRACE BRUCKNER

**I**N OUR SCHOOL we have carried on a program of home visits for several years. Every fall when teachers take up their work with a new homeroom group the home calls are as much a part of the teaching job as the subject matter.

Visiting in the home better acquaints the teacher with the child and his home environment. The teacher meets and chats with the parent or parents on home ground and there can be fostered, without a doubt, a kindlier relationship between home and school. Knowing the home is the surest way to understand and help the child; knowing the parent through friendly visits is the best way to build a sound and understanding friendship.

The guidance program in any school is more surely in the hands of homeroom teachers who know the homes of their children than it is in the hands of appointed deans themselves.

There are, however, some very real problems in the home-calls program. Time to do

the job is perhaps the major difficulty.

With 35 to 40 children in a homeroom family, living east, west, north and south, the great problem is how to get all the calling done and do everything else, too. At best one can call on only three or four, depending on where and how near they live to each other, between 4:00 P.M. and dinner time. These several calls will necessitate many blocks, in some cases, miles, and those of us without cars find this a real problem.

In our system it was suggested that some parent with a car aid in this visitation program by taking the teacher and accompanying her on calls. It sounds nice, but the idea has two distinct disadvantages: First, none of us wishes to ask this favor either of parents or fellow-teachers who own cars; Second, no home visit is as free, personal, or as valuable when the teacher is thus accompanied.

In most cases the parent visited will say little if Molly's mother is present—the situation is no longer a friendly visit between Betsy Jane's teacher and Betsy Jane's mother. Important problems, even little troubles that are mountains to Betsy Jane and Betsy Jane's mother, are jealously guarded. When I go calling I wish to go alone to visit Betsy Jane's and John's and Elizabeth Ann's family.

Another real problem is that of finding the parent home when I call. Checking carefully with the child a day ahead of calling helps, but it doesn't always work. Then, there are the homes where the mother works, and that presents still another problem. Or there is the country home that is just as important as the home within walk-

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *One of our editors said when this article was discussed that "Some readers will nod agreement, and some will rave." Anyway, here is the plan of Meeker Junior High School, Greeley, Colo. Miss Bruckner tells some of the things she has encountered in the homes of her pupils, what she has gained by the effort, and what the opposition thinks. Is home visitation an imposition on teachers? Or must teachers know the home backgrounds of their pupils? Don't glare like that at us. At the moment, we're just asking.*

ing distance. All these things the homeroom teacher finds before her when she sets out to visit the homes of her pupils.

At the beginning of the school year my homeroom family consisted of 39 children—12 boys and 27 girls, and not a twin or triplet in the household! At this writing I have two more children, not twins either. I have visited in all the homes of these children except the country ones and one where it seemed best not to do so. I've called a second time at four homes where the parent was not at home when the first call was made.

Hours and hours it takes! Miles and miles one walks! Even so I am still of the opinion that home visits pay dividends at least to the child, and after all it is the child we serve.

#### HOME CONDITIONS

Home conditions—food, shelter, necessities, luxuries—and family relationships are very important to an understanding of that pupil you are endeavoring to teach. The child's emotional reactions, his personality, may be accounted for and more wisely directed when home conditions and problems are observed first-hand. Through home calls unusual factors often come to light, factors which might and probably do influence the child's behavior and achievement in and out of school, for better or for worse. Such information may be of invaluable aid to deans, other teachers, the school nurse, the personnel director, the guidance clinic. To this end reports of home visits are kept for reference at any time.

I find parents very cordial, and some show a marked appreciation of home visits. In almost every case the visit ends with, "Thank you for coming. Do come see us again." Only on rare occasions are parents too busy to visit or unwilling to extend a warm and gracious invitation to enter. In three years I have had but two parents who did not invite me in. One of these was too embarrassed because of the condition

of her home to do so; the other, I think, did not know that perhaps it would be nice to extend such an invitation. In some cases mothers are entirely too busy to ever stay home, but all the rest thank you for calling and ask you to come again. Now and then there is an invitation to stay for supper—and you're tired and hungry enough to accept! But you don't of course, not on this first occasion.

#### STRENGTH AND TIME

Home visits exact a great deal of strength, much time, oftentimes a slighting of work that needs to be done at one and the same time, but, in the words of the famous Mrs. McGill Ruggles, "Perhaps it's worth 't!"

In three years of making calls I've gained much in fellowship and human sympathy from touching personally the lives of people who concern me most—"my children" and the parents of "my children". The stories behind the travels of a homeroom teacher into the homes of America's children would make good reading.

All teachers, however, do not feel as I do about the matter. One of my fellow teachers says:

"I do not feel equal to calling in homes of strangers and adequately representing either the school or myself. Six per cent of parents are honored by teachers' home calls; eighty-five per cent of parents tolerate such home calls, and are definitely bored, and nine per cent seem to me to be rather openly hostile."

Another teacher reports:

"In the forty-three homes in which I called I found fourteen children who lived in homes either broken by death or divorce, ten children in homes that were comfortably furnished. Nine dwelt in extremely poor homes, with scarcely the necessities of life, and another ten were members of homes where the mothers themselves were working!"

Stories such as these—how important to know!

## ➤ IDEAS IN BRIEF ➤

### Practical ideas selected and condensed from articles in state and specialized educational journals

#### *We Cleaned Up the Town*

Our 7th- and 8th-grade social-studies classes decided that Lexington, Mo., would be a happier place to live in if it were cleaner. To do something about it they would have to gain the cooperation of the entire school and of the town. They peered into every nook of the town to compile lists of specific cleaning that needed doing and should be done. Armed with the facts, committees called on the mayor, the street commissioner, the fire chief, members of the city council, editors, and heads of various community organizations. They got promises of assistance. The publicity committee formulated a letter to the citizens presenting the plan and asking for general participation. This was published in the local papers, and was followed by articles on projects, ways and means. Talks were given in all schools, English classes wrote "clean-up" rhymes, art classes made posters to put up about town. The city was divided into 8 districts. Pupil squads for each section searched for places needing attention, and saw that they got it. The pupils showed so much willingness to work that adults pitched in to help. We cleaned up Lexington, and we made the public happy about its school. (And the project won Lexington Junior-Senior High School first prize in a national citizenship contest.)—VERNA OWEN in *School and Community*.

#### *Decorating Blackboards*

Nearly every teacher has some available blackboard space that is rarely used. I use some of mine for a constant series of projects. Pupils use Tempora paint to make complete outline maps of Europe, the United States, New Jersey, and the local community, Irvington, on the board. This thick water-color medium is cheap and easy to use, and comes off readily with water. Chalk outlines can be drawn over Tempora and then erased without disturbing the Tempora background. For a more or less permanent outline which can be washed without coming off, cover the Tempora lightly with white lacquer and remove the lacquer later with alcohol. It's very little trouble.

Aside from the conventional method of using a good artist in your class, blackboard drawings may be made by projecting an outline on the board with a lantern, to be drawn in chalk and painted

later. Or chalk the back of a large wall map and trace the outline on the board with a blunt instrument. This makes a mark that can be copied over with paint. For colors the sections can be painted in solidly and taken off as necessary with a sponge.—HOWARD B. SILSBEE in *New Jersey Educational Review*.

#### *"Our Novelette"*

Wading through countless dull, dry, stilted themes is the lot of the English teacher. In the second semester of Sophomore English it became apparent that Something Must Be Done. The class hit upon the idea of collaborating on a novelette. First step was to elect a Plot Committee. The class chose one of several plots developed by the committee. Each of the 10 chapters was assigned to one or more writers. Those who could write good dialog worked with others more proficient in description. As chapters were completed, the class studied them for paragraph arrangement, sentence structure, choice of words, and criticized exposition, narration, and characterization. As each chapter was accepted it was turned over to a Correction Committee whose knowledge of grammar was better than their writing skill. A Publication Committee had the task of revising the chapters into some unity of style, characterization, etc. Artists and typists in the class illustrated and typed a copy for presentation to the school library. Everyone had worked enthusiastically on "our novelette". Everything of value to the entire group had been done in class, while special committee meetings were held in the anteroom. Because of increased interest, the pupils gained a greater knowledge of written expression than they could have from mere theme work.—DONALD W. MITCHELL in *Sierra Educational News*.

#### *A Chance for Counselors*

Playground supervision during the noon hour often is mere policing. At Golden Gate Junior High School, Oakland, Cal., it is an additional opportunity for counseling, casual group discussion with the counselors, and increased individual contacts of the counselors with pupils. The boys' counselor and the girls' counselor eat lunch the period before noon, and are in charge of the grounds and the auditorium throughout the pupils' lunch hour, for the purposes mentioned. Every noon the prin



cial may be found on the playgrounds or in the auditorium, chatting with groups of pupils or even umpiring a game.—ROY T. NICHOLS in *Sierra Educational News*.

### *Harnessing Spring Fever*

Spring lures a boy's thoughts from his lesson to the outdoors, and baseball crowds the words of the textbook out of his mind. Instead of taking this sitting down, Bronx Vocational High School utilizes such spring fever to add interest to the work in many different subjects. The plan has as its nucleus the activities of the Health Education Department. Last April it gave an instructional unit called "Baseball School", consisting of lessons in pitching, fielding, throwing, batting, bunting, and base-running. Baseball films were shown to the entire school, team try-outs were publicized, and an intramural softball tournament was announced. The various subject departments lay in wait to snare this frenzy of interest. The library promoted reading matter on baseball. In English classes, papers on baseball experiences were written. Math. pupils computed batting averages, studied parabolas. Science classes came through with explanations of Newton's Laws of Motion, the pendulum, centrifugal force. Social-studies classes dealt with the growth of baseball and the social values of sports. In shop, pupils processed bats, printed baseball schedules and intra-mural blanks, constructed a trophy case and trophy stands. Baseball is only one of many natural sparks for learning. During the period we used it, daily attendance increased, restlessness decreased, and classwork improved.—ALEX WEINSTEIN and SAMUEL NORDAN in *High Points*.

### *Coaches Club*

The Coaches Club of Pampa, Tex., Junior High School was organized to make the intramural sports program of the school more democratic by giving the boys more responsibility in the administration of the program. This year we began the teaching of intramural sports skills in the physical-education classes, to give every boy a more equal opportunity in competition. The Coaches Club has a member from each homeroom. He selects, manages, and coaches his homeroom team. Members meet twice a week for instruction in their work. The pupil coaches decide when each tournament is to be played, make a complete schedule, select pupil officials, set up tournament rules, do all the substituting, scorekeeping, and timekeeping, keep all records, and select an intramural all-tournament team.—JACK DAVIS in *Texas Outlook*.

### *Central Stock Room, NYA*

Every administrator has at some time or other been unable to say at once whether the school has a certain type of supply requested by a teacher. Much time is wasted hunting for it in various storage places, or even in several buildings. In the Castle Rock, Wash., Public Schools, there is a central stock room to which all supplies are delivered and stored. It has numbered storage bins, and a stock-room card index to record supplies "in" and "out". An efficient NYA girl is in charge. The administrator always knows whether an item is in stock. Also, at the end of the budget year the cards show the total amount of each article used during the year, and the balance on hand—a great aid in ordering supplies for the succeeding year.—H. C. JONES in *Washington Education Journal*.

### *Parents Get a Taste*

"Dear Parent: The High School PTA, together with the Junior and Senior Councils, wants you to come back to school tonight. . . . Take over your boy's or girl's schedule. . . . Classes will begin after a short assembly meeting." This invitation brought 400 parents, and a number of pupils, to Austin, Minn., High School last November. During the 15 minutes of each class, the parents asked questions and the teachers explained. At the close of the last-period class parents signed their schedule cards and turned them in to the teacher. This was done in order that the homeroom having the largest percentage of parents present could be given a prize. During the last period parents also wrote on their reactions to the program.—L. J. GUSTAFSON in *Minnesota Journal of Education*.

### *"Boy Dates Girl"*

Senior speech students with experience in dramatics were used to dramatize matters of etiquette to freshmen attending classes in occupational information at Balboa High School, Panama Canal Zone. The dramatization was centered around the correct etiquette of dating. In the course of the program, boy asked girl for a date; girl refused, pleading a previous engagement; boy asked second girl, who accepted. Two potentially awkward situations were thus smoothed out. In later scenes, boy called for girl and returned girl to her home. That the freshmen saw the educational aspect of the program was plain from the number and quality of the questions the cast was called upon to answer at the conclusion of the performance.—SUBERT TURBYFILL in *Canal Zone School Bulletin*.

# The Unsolved Case of

No. 9 in the *Pupil  
Case History Series*

## LILA ARCHER

By EVELYN F. BAILEY

SHE STOOD in the sumptuous office of one of those million-dollar high schools, among plaster casts of Greek bas-reliefs, framed reproductions of Renaissance paintings, pongee silk curtains, and waxed linoleum—a forlorn, thin black girl of fifteen.

It was cold weather, but her short dress was of some faded, flowered cotton goods, and her sweater was too small—shrunk and matted from many washings that had caused the green stripes to run into the white ones. But nothing could conceal the graceful, supple lines of her body, and of her long, well-shaped legs, very black, and clad in ankle socks. Her dirty white saddle shoes had one rubber sole partly detached, loose and flapping. Her hair, slicked so that the wool was no longer kinky, was worn in a page-boy bob.

Furtively she looked at the door each time a messenger came or went. The whites of her eyes looked like those of a frightened horse; she rolled them up every now and then to look at the clock. She stood with weary grace, first on one foot and then on



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Even if you sometimes sit on the floor with your pupils, psychologically there is usually the teacher's desk between you and most of them. It is when some reader manages to get around that barrier and learn what is really going on in the mind of a "problem child", or a child with a problem, that we get another article for the Pupil Case History Series. Mrs. Bailey, author of the present article, teaches languages in a small New Jersey junior high school.*

the other, away from the wall, on a black inlaid border in the linoleum, appointed for the line-up of culprits who were ranged for judgment before a door marked Principal's Office. There were no other offenders, as the afternoon was well advanced.

Feeling herself unobserved, she gradually edged off the straight and narrow path so that she could lean slouchingly against the wall. The principal was elsewhere in the building. She dreaded his coming.

Two young women, one an office worker and one a teacher with a free period, chatted and laughed. Their talk afforded her a momentary respite from her apprehension. She eyed them eagerly, absorbing every detail—their hair, their red nails, their accessories. They were discussing makes and models of cars, looking across the playground to a parking place.

"I'm getting a little convertible roadster this spring," said the teacher. "I've pretty well decided on a Buick. The family have a Chevrolet, but I'd like something a little nicer."

"My father's new one is a Packard," said the office girl, importantly.

The Negro girl looked at her with awe. She knew her. The office girl's father was an important man in the community. She had graduated only the June before, and had at once been given the school position.

Lila's eyes lost their hunted look, grew dreamy. It must be wonderful to have clothes like that, and a car, and to be—she wanted to say "secure", but she knew only the idea, and not the word.

Last night Pop had hit Mom because he had spent his WPA money in the saloon,

and wanted some of what Mom had earned out of washing by the day. There had been a fight all night, and nobody had slept except the four youngest ones. Lila and Percy and Mortimer had peeked into the kitchen, listening to the loud arguments. She was tired and sleepy today.

But a nervous impulsion kept driving her to leave gazing and dreaming, and to get to work, because she had to "learn a piece". She took her literature book from under her arm, and found the place. The whole trouble had started from her not knowing "the piece" by heart the day before. The ultimate time given for anyone to learn it had long passed. She knew she was the butt of the class, the one Negro, poor and comic and "dumb", and she rather welcomed her status—anything for a little notice. It had become screamingly funny to have Lila called on and not know the passage that every freshman in her group had memorized long ago.

She babbled it softly to herself as she leaned her head against the wall, and wrapped one limber leg around the other.

He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small,  
For the dear God who loveth us  
He made and loveth all.

She could not keep her thoughts from straying. Children dancing in the playground, the afternoon session of the adjacent elementary school's kindergarten, took her shallow attention. She began to hunch her shoulders in rhythm, sympathetic to their singing and skipping in a ring. With feet not lifted, her body turned and shifted slightly, dancing though standing still. Dancing was in her wild young blood.

Just as suddenly as she had twitched and gone jitterbugging, her mood plunged to gloom. Dancing! It was partly that, had got her into this trouble. She wondered whether she ought to tell the principal the whole truth when he came. She considered what would be the right way to get him to hear her side of the matter. Miss Raymond had

said, "Tomorrow you'll go to the office and tell exactly what I found you doing, Lila Archer."

Well, what had it been? She had gone to the infirmary, feigning illness to get out of writing the poem on the day that was the deadline to prove you had learned it. In the infirmary she had lain down on a cot, feeling perfectly well; she had moaned a little, acting the part and enjoying herself. Two other girls—rich white girls from the Hillcrest Park section—were lying on cots, with blankets over them, each waiting for her mother to come with the family car and take her home. The school nurse phoned to the mother of one girl, and gave the other one some bicarbonate.

Lila herself, offered an aspirin by the nurse, had taken it, keenly enjoying sitting up, sipping water, rolling her eyes in agony—being ministered to like a white girl. She almost felt deliciously ill, so dramatic and unusual was the situation.

Presently, opening her eyes, she noticed that the nurse had left the room. The girl who had drunk the dose of bicarbonate became suddenly nauseated. Lila was instantly up, dashing to her help. She was used to baby-tending, to sudden emergencies. It was all very thrilling, and she tingled with importance and drama.

"Res' yo'self, honey, take it easy now, you goin' be all right, baby." She smoothed the sick girl's fine gold hair, looked at the way the tiny numerals on the dial of her little wrist-watch gleamed out luminously in certain lights.

Presently both the sick girls felt a little better. They conversed, speaking weakly. Lila did not want to lie down any more. She was full of energy and excitement. She had an audience. Forgetting her role of invalid, she ripped a paper towel out of the steel container, folded it, and pinned it around her forehead.

"I'll be train' nurse, you play you two patients in a hospital." The girls, as childish as she though they were both juniors, smiled

at her, tacitly played the game with her. She tucked the blankets round their feet, composed their hands and arms outside on the covers, felt their pulses. She loved touching them, feeling the fine softness of their hands. Her own were work-hardened from scrubbing and laundering, for her mother went out washing daily, and Lila was the eldest girl at home.

A great tenderness for the white girls stirred her soft, impressionable heart. She wanted their notice, their approval.

"I kin dance for yuh!" she breathed, suddenly inspired. "Cheer you up till you ma come get you! Look here!"

She began to sing softly, "Nya, nya, nya, said de lil fox!" and to dance her own graceful, eccentric rhythms up and down the aisle beside the cots. A queer figure she made, the paper nurse's-cap fallen forward over one eye, as she jerked back and forth before an imaginary partner, and pranced high, with lovely, instinctive grace.

Her warning came when she perceived that her two patients, who had been leaning on their elbows and partly sitting up to see the show, had suddenly lost interest right before her eyes, and had collapsed on their pillows and drawn their blankets round them.

Lila turned and faced an irate teacher. Miss Raymond had come down to see how sick Lila was.

She wondered whether she should tell the principal the truth. She veered away from a complete confession of her evasion of the lesson, and of her feigned illness. She began to plan a different approach. How would it be to tell him about last night when Pop hit Mom, and her nose bled, and Lila had rushed in from the bedroom, and pushed Pop down on the kitchen lounge? They had all wept, and cursed, and cried, and Pop had fallen on his knees in contrition and intoxication. It had all been so thrilling, and Lila had felt so richly emotional.

Her mother had blessed her for the moral

support, and had called her "a heavenly angel chile". Had she better act now for the principal the role of the family peace-maker?

But it wasn't nice to have to tell him about Pop's getting drunk, because maybe he might have Pop put off the WPA that was digging the new sewer. Lila knew the principal was an important man, who played golf with other big, rich men of that suburban community. 'Cause Mortimer caddied for them, and he knew.

There was just a sprinkling of Negroes, housed miserably, who did day's-work, gardening, and odd jobs, mostly for the young married set in the suburb. As there was only one high school—and that one of Tudor Gothic magnificence—the few Negro children who were under sixteen attended it, an unwelcome but insoluble problem.

Suddenly a harsh hand gripped her elbow. "You get away from that wall, and stand out where you belong, on this line, young lady!" The office girl glared at her. Lila, glaring back, stepped out and stood on the line. She saw them both laugh, make remarks behind their shielding hands, and glance at her. She felt ragged and shabby, but she made bold, pouting faces back at them, and waggled her head menacingly. But she forgot her temper the next instant, watching the marvel of an electric mimeograph machine, clashing in rhythm as it began to whip out sheet after sheet of printed paper.

Again she wrenched her confused, weary, emotional mind away from distractions, and again she studied,

". . . Who loveth best  
All things both great and small."

If she hadn't lost her rest last night, she had meant to get up early and learn the "piece", and surprise Miss Raymond. But Mom and Pop, each afflicted with a headache of a different sort, had not awakened, and she herself had overslept. There had been no time to study.



So here she was. And here was the principal, coming in with heavy, possessive tread.

The dreaded moment was upon her. He gave her a stern, searching look as he passed into his office and shut the door. The clerk followed him. After a moment she came out, and said with malicious, mock politeness, "You may go in now."

Lila stood shivering with excitement and fatigue before his handsome mahogany desk. He was a big, well-built, well-fed man. He moved an onyx paperweight from place to place on his desk. He looked at Lila, at her skinny body, her poor clothes, her bare, black arms and terrified face.

Suddenly she began to tell her story. She began with the difficulty of learning the poem, went into details of the kitchen fight, got sidetracked about the play of trained-nursing in the infirmary, and then babbled, almost in tears, her plea not to take Pop off the WPA rolls.

The principal seemed to get some sense out of the jumble, for he nodded understandingly. He looked out of the window thoughtfully; then he moved the paperweight again. He seemed to put aside details, and tried to win Lila over to calmness first. It was evidently not necessary to explain to him the Negro problem in that

rich little suburb, nor Lila's rags, nor Mom's black eye. He took a round-about tack.

"What book have you there?" he asked suddenly, kindly.

"My littacher book. That's what made all the trouble. I gotta learn a long piece, but seems I never get no time—get stuck at the same place—or somehow I never do get to learn it."

"What's it about—the piece?"

Lila began to feel more at ease with him. She rolled her eyes to the ceiling, to concentrate, to recall.

"Well, some of it goes like this." She gabbled the lines.

He prayeth best who loveth best  
All things both great and small,  
For the dear God who loveth us,  
He made and loveth all.

When she met his eyes, after this effort to show him that she really had tried to learn some of it, he was smiling at her. His keen eyes behind his glasses were soft and kind. She grew a little bit bolder.

"But they's a lot more of it, and I don't know it yet. I can't take no intruss in it, nohow. 'Cause it don't—mean nothin'."

He was looking at her, it seemed to her, a little sadly.

"No," he said slowly, "I guess it doesn't mean—very much."



### *What We Say, What We Do*

It seems hardly probable that the public (unless educated to it) would accept a completely democratized school as fulfilling the purposes for which schools are organized and paid for. The curse of our American culture is that we are hypocrites all. We are supposedly a Christian nation, but nearly every phase of our civic and national life violates the Christian principles of brotherliness and good will. We call ourselves a democracy, yet tolerate undemocratic actions in business, in politics, in education. If the schools really taught children to think critically and to act in truth and honesty, would they long tolerate the existing contrasts between what we say and what we do? . . .

We shall have to conform as usual and put up enough of a bluff of teaching democracy to "get by". The more sincere among our ranks, however, will realize our own lack of preparation to deal really democratically with educational problems, and will immediately set about studying, experimenting, and modifying our practices. . . . We can best do our part in saving the nation by so acting in our classrooms that our charges may get as much real experience in democratic living as we know how to give. Academic teaching about democracy by methods that give the lie to the truths we utter will only render our efforts null and void.—S. A. COURTIS, University of Michigan.

# DON'T CROWD *A principal answers 2 teachers' requests*

## for that Cup of Coffee

By  
PENCIE FULTON

IN RECENT ISSUES of THE CLEARING HOUSE two teachers have described what they consider desirable characteristics of principals and acceptable activities in which principals should engage. (See Editor's Note below—Ed.) This approach to the teacher-principal relationship is very refreshing to me. My reading on the subject has not been entirely voluntary, summer school being as it is, but it has been, I think, fairly exhaustive.

I have found that many authors—far too many—have discussed the subject, going into great detail with check lists and observation forms. Everything about the teacher from personal appearance and social graces to classroom techniques has been examined microscopically. Standards have been set up for grading teachers in much the same routine fashion that one's pedigreed pup is judged in the dog show. But the worm will turn—and so we see the question from an-



EDITOR'S NOTE: *After publishing Esther Sellie's "Supervisory Helps: What a Teacher Desires of a Principal" in the April 1941 issue, and Martha Bucher's "What I Want of My Principal", we sat back to wait for a principal to submit an article discussing the two teachers' desires from an administrator's point of view. Miss Fulton, principal of the Wilson Junior High School, Danville, Va., does that in the accompanying article. We hope the controversy isn't ended. We'd like to see both teachers and principals get everything they want. But in this most perfect of all possible worlds it doesn't seem likely. The next best thing is open discussion.*

other point of view, just for a change.

It is always easy to talk about something with which we have had no experience. We know nothing about it and so are not confined by the boundaries of facts. A broad general statement, whose theoretical truth cannot be questioned, can be made to cover a great deal of territory. It is with the facility of the uninitiated that Miss Sellie calls upon principals to rise above clerical work and administrative duties in order that they may find time for supervision.

I assume we agree that the purpose of supervision is the improvement of the instructional program of the school. I am willing—yea, eager—to rise to supervisory heights, but just where shall I draw the line between clerical or administrative duties and my supervisory activities? When I make adjustments in a pupil's schedule so that he may be given an opportunity to do work suited to him as an individual, shall I call this administrative or supervisory?

If I spend an hour at my desk planning to improve a teacher's working conditions, am I not making it possible for that teacher to do a more satisfactory job in the classroom? Clerical, administrative, or supervisory—which? That "smoothly running machine" of which mention is made so casually is never appreciated until it slips a cog.

I am intrigued by the "hostess" idea which is advanced by Miss Sellie. The principal, I am informed, must never act bored, become conspicuous, or show signs of disapproval while in the hostess-guest situation during a classroom visit. In fact, a principal who is in an "owly or unsympathetic" mood should not visit the classroom. (Probably this is the time for doing those clerical and

administrative assignments which superintendents and school boards expect to be done some time!)

Surely the principal should be courteous in the classroom as well as in the office, where it is suggested a cup of coffee be served the teacher who comes in for a conference. (The question flashes in my mind: How shall I classify the making and serving of that cup of coffee—as a clerical, administrative, or supervisory duty?) But if the principal should be somewhat distraught upon entering the classroom, will not the hostess put him at ease and win back his good humor through her skillful and tactful manner?

Principals should be patient and tolerant, Miss Sellie opines. I agree. Alas, they must be. How else could they endure the ignoring of bulletins over whose composition they spend weary hours—clerical work though that may be? Those bulletins that rest peacefully and unread in the “upper-left-hand drawer” of so many teachers’ desks! Those bulletins that *must* not be read in teachers’ meetings, and that *will* not be read by those free souls who cannot be hampered by the restrictions of regulations and uniform practice!

Teachers, as you rise to join in the criticism of principals, past, present, and future, may I speak one word of warning? Do not ask too much. Remember that we principals are only human. (Or are we?) Recognize our limitations. Do not go to the extremes taken by Miss Bucher. It may be pos-

sible for me to meet some of her demands. I would not object to treating her, as she requests, as an intellectual equal one minute and as a woman the next. (Are the two necessarily antithetical?) I would gladly laugh with her on occasion, and even attempt to discuss world affairs, of which I am as ignorant as most. But she ought not to demand that I have the “unbiased judgment of a father of both boys and girls”. Nature turned thumbs down on that when I was relegated to the feminine sex.

In all seriousness, can't we put an end to this controversy between teachers and principals? Are we not concerned with the same problem—the greatest good for the boys and girls with whom we work? The fact that we approach the problem from somewhat different angles ought not to confuse us. Let us work together, pooling our experiences, making allowances for our mutual shortcomings, appreciating the admirable purpose back of even our feeblest efforts.

Do not make me, as a principal, an outsider in your classroom when I fail to meet the standards which you may set up. Let me feel free to come and go, to be accepted as a fellow-worker—not as a guest. When you ask for the “best type of supervision” let it include the organization and administration of the school. Judge the supervisory program on the basis of the total achievement of all school activities. Sympathetic understanding, common goals, and united effort—is not that the answer we seek?



### *Report after 25 Years*

It is just twenty-five years since the influential N.E.A. Committee on the Social Studies recommended a course called Problems of American Democracy for the final year of senior high school. By 1923 the course had gained a foothold; by 1928 it was being offered in 890 high schools in 38 states; by 1934 it was being offered in more than 12,000 high schools in every state, to more than half a million pupils, and among social-studies courses

it ranked in enrolment second only to the American history offering. There is reason to believe that the problems course has continued to gain in the years since 1934. . . . In the past twenty-five years the problems course has emerged as a promising, if not as yet an altogether efficient, conclusion to our social-studies program. Its content has become increasingly flexible, increasingly realistic.—ERLING M. HUNT in *Social Education*.

# The Heavenly Muse *Deadlines cause many dead lines*

## and SENIOR THEMES

By  
GEORGE H. HENRY

FOR THE LIFE of me I can never understand why pupils should be made to hand in themes "on time"—that is, have themes scheduled automatically on certain fixed dates. After considering the varied peculiarities in writing habits among professional authors and being a victim of the notorious fickleness of the muses myself, I wonder how any young pupil can endure the deadening routine of English reports like so much baking to be done every Friday. Of course, the whole composition concept is still arranged for the convenience of teachers and the administrative report card system rather than based upon the nature of the creative impulse. Self-expression, so delicate at best, becomes dependent on bookkeeping!

For some traditional reason several batches of themes must be marked periodically and the results sent home, and so the creative efforts of a hundred people fall in certain arbitrary cycles. Clyde better get that short story ended by the 16th irrespective of the nature of the plot, because re-



EDITOR'S NOTE: *Mr. Henry reports here that he lets his English pupils perform according to their writing habits. The "stolid pluggers" turn in their boring papers on time. But he says that he gets the best work from the pupils who aren't time-clock punchers. The author is principal of the Community School, Dover, Del. If any English teacher wishes to submit an article opposing Mr. Henry's plan, we shall expect his manuscript promptly: the deadline, let us say, shall be January 15.*

ports come out the 18th, leaving "prof" a day to mark it!

I once read a book on teaching by a famous English teacher whose theory it was that late themes must not be tolerated, for punctuality in itself is a virtue. I doubt whether any pupil learns promptness in this way. I do know, however, that an incentive to write is often killed by dead-line threats; work has been done carelessly merely to get it in on time.

Probably this procedure does prepare one for the exacting efficiency of business. If so, we must define the purpose of English composition. Is it a device to condition the mentality to system and routine, or to increase the sensitivity of ears, eyes, and heart by pinning down in words what is heard, seen, and felt?

I once had a teacher of considerable experience help me with my class bookkeeping. On the outside of a certain theme he had written "Note: this theme is three days late." It was a beautiful treatment of Amy Lowell's poems, with the imagist movement as a background. Why, I wouldn't have the heart to cut the mark of such an excellent attempt.

After nagging one boy constantly about late themes, I wormed from him, only because of the shattered loyalty to his own home, how he lay abed nights worrying about his parents. "If your father and mother were always quarreling and mother left you with two children to stay with nights, and father went off slamming the door, mad, you'd have trouble writing, too."

The most interesting case I ever had was



Field's. Weeks went by and not a scrap of written work came from him, so that I was forced to fail him for the first marking period.

"I'll hand every theme in and they'll be good ones too, if you'll let me take my good old time writing them."

"But suppose I let everyone do this—"

"That's just what all my teachers say, but I didn't expect it from you."

This flattering remark worked well. I consented.

"And I want to write on the same subject all year." This audacity was like an ultimatum from the muse herself, and since I had sentimentally scrambled half way up Mt. Parnassus in reality, I rather liked his defiance.

A long period went by and then themes came in at all kinds of odd times—all out of harmony with the established marking periods of the office and my own unit plans. He anticipated by three weeks my pet assignment on Thoreau. Every one was on nature—a pond at evening, dawn in the pines, dew in the fields, kinds of fish, solitude, sounds at night.

"You see, I write at first hand and I have to work in the store some week-ends, and that throws me back."

I gave him Thoreau to read—we were now on Poe—and then Lew Sarett; more on Bryant also appealed, and, finally, "An Almanac for Moderns". Field's was no synthetic concoction merely to get by, and he used to want to sit beside me as I read his work, as occasionally I would look up to swap notes on lily pads and spladder-docks, or raspberry bushes in the morning mist. After graduation this boy would send me a theme occasionally.

Other excuses may go something like this: "You see, we don't heat the parlor during the week, and with the kids playing train on the kitchen floor and dad monkeying with the radio, I can't keep my mind on a theme."

"Why don't you go to your room?"

"My room! What would I write on? There's only a bed!"

"Write *in* bed. Sam Johnson did."

"Mom won't let two lights on at the same time—week-days."

Or it may be: "I've just now found an article on Edgar Lee Masters and I see how I can improve a few pages. May I have about two more days?"

"But your report goes out tomorrow."

"Dear me, that's right. Well, I guess I'll have to let the article go. It had some good points."

"Heavens no! Go ahead and read it. I'll put a mark on your card anyway—if you promise a good theme—"

"It's eleven pages already!" he added, to justify my irregularity.

A girl may have her assignment complete, in beautiful handwriting, and say, "I simply am not pleased with my conclusion. Here, read how weak it is."

I skimmed it, and nodded.

"May I have another day? I'm going to do that page over."

"Go ahead." How could I refuse? After all, a batch of themes will often lie in my drawer several days before I can get around to them. I wait, too, for the proper mood.

No, my system, or lack of system, doesn't break down the morale of those stolid pluggers who always do themes on time. They are getting in trim to punch the time clock. It is all one—the demand of teacher, of machine, or of dividends. Sometimes I wish they were late; maybe their offerings would not be so boring—or their lives, years hence, when, geared body and soul to industry, they will emerge shallow "successes"—self-consciously wealthy, arrogantly democratic, dictating pronouncements to those free spirits who, true to themselves, would not play industry's game.

I'm glad for a hundred requests a year like this: "I've just seen *Wuthering Heights* in the movies and I got an idea of comparing a character in that with one in *Ethan Frome*. I'm going to do my whole

report over. Do you mind marking my report card incomplete and fixing it up next period?"

Why should I mind? I'm dizzy sometimes at "bookkeeping" and trying to catalog in

my head all these deviations from the normal routine, and little do they realize that this new freedom in self-expression is all an added burden to me; their fun from which, by the way, is the real reward of teaching.



## \* \* \* FINDINGS \* \* \*

**PURSUIITS:** Here are a few interesting items about the out-of-school life of pupils of Carson, Va., High-School, selected from a survey-report of L. H. Griffin in *Virginia Journal of Education*: 20% like to play slot machines; 10% "reacted in favor of" gambling; 89% chew gum; 35% admitted using wine, 21% beer, 6% whiskey. Only 15% admitted using tobacco, and Mr. Griffin thinks they were holding out on him there. About 80% are members of some church; 50% attend Sunday school, and 36% church, regularly—the others irregularly. Your reporter is most worried over the 20% who like to play slot machines. General practice is for owners to set the machines so that over a period of time they return one coin for every three inserted. It's a challenge, if not an insult, to every high school.

**SUPERIOR:** Group thinking of 1,062 high-school principals on what their schools should do for superior pupils, as reported in *High-School Methods with Superior Students*, N. E. A. research bulletin: 100% believe that school provisions for superior pupils should differ from those for average pupils; fewer than 25% believe that superior pupils should complete the curriculum in less time than average pupils. About 68% think that superior pupils should be given more freedom in choosing courses than average pupils, and about 60% believed that superior pupils should be given a special integrated

curriculum involving a variety of subjects and extending through several school years. Fewer than 50% think that superior pupils need superior teachers.

**PRINCIPAL:** The facts about 586 white public-high-school principals in Kentucky allow Thomas C. Little in *Kentucky School Journal* to picture the hypothetical average individual: He is a man, 37, who began teaching in 1926 at a salary of \$720.21, and entered his present principalship 6 years ago from a high-school teaching position. He now makes \$1,527, an increase of \$210.02 over his beginning salary in the same school. He was graduated from a State Teachers College in 1932, and has completed more than one-fourth of his work toward a Master's Degree. He has had 3.8 years of elementary and 10.6 years of high-school experience. His high school has 209 pupils, 8 full-time and 1 part-time teacher. Per week he spends: 21.7 periods teaching; 6.6 periods supervising in both the high school and an elementary school that's under his wing; 1.6 periods on extracurricular activities, 4 periods at "various and sundry" tasks—and has only 6.2 periods left for administrative duties. We wonder how long it will take him to get that Master's Degree.

**ATHLETES:** Over a period of 6 years, 225 male high-school athletes studied showed a mental ability of 99.9, as compared to 100.82 for 255 non-athletes (less than 1% difference) reports Robert Kyle in *West Virginia School Journal*. But the athletes' scholastic averages for the period were only about 1/5 of 1% below that of the non-athletes (82.99 compared to 83.19). Scholastic average for one-sport athletes was 83.8, two-sport athletes, 82.65, and three-sport athletes, 81.3. Among athletes, track produced the brightest pupils, followed in order by basketball, football, and baseball. Athletes made their lowest grades, on the average, in English—but the non-athletes made their next-to-lowest grades in English, too. So you English teachers stop calling us athletes dumb.

—♦—

**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Good, bad, indifferent, or important, there is a great amount of counting studies and other research going on in the field of education. We think readers will be interested in brief, unqualified summaries of some main points in some of the findings. Lack of space prohibits much explanation of methods used, degree of accuracy or conclusiveness, and sometimes even the scope of the study. Readers granting such limitations may find these flashes in the pan interesting, provocative—sometimes amusing.

# SLOW LEARNERS

Denver's  
Program

## LEARN BY DOING

By  
FLORENCE S. HARPER

IT is impossible to state conclusively just where and in what ratio or percentage the so-called slow learner may be found. But when one has watched the progress of such pupils over a period of several years, he can state with authority many of the activities in which the slow-learners are engaged, and knows something of the success or lack of success with which they have met. These individuals are found throughout the entire business, industrial, social order in some capacity.

Some of them are establishing homes, rearing families, holding positions in PTA, helping elect school boards, discussing school procedures and policies. In department stores they transport patrons in elevators, sell a pair of shoes, give a manicure, model hosiery, arrange stock, deliver merchandise, and in numerous other ways are a functioning part of a great plant. In the Five-and-Ten they sell numerous small articles, total the sales account, and make change.

Some are delightful, attractive and charming in their service; others are sullen, morose, indifferent, inaccurate or careless. At



EDITOR'S NOTE: "At this time," writes Miss Harper, "Denver's city-wide committee on courses for slow learners is beginning procedures according to the proposals contained in this article. These recommendations are based upon our classroom experience, and in my own classes I have been using with success many of the methods suggested." The author teaches in West High School, Denver, Colo.

gasoline filling stations they perform duties intelligently, swiftly, or meticulously and slowly, some with much talking, others with great shyness and timidity, according to their natures and training. Many of the truck drivers and delivery boys one recognizes as the slow-learners of the classroom.

On election day many slow-learners are registered, going to the polls to vote on amendments of greatest significance, to vote for candidates in the face of grave problems and questionable results. Again, one of these may have succeeded in establishing a small business of his own, and with his wife and some other help is serving a trade that is pleasing to his patrons and highly satisfying to himself. Others are trying to eke out an existence on an insufficient relief check or are trying to gain employment on WPA.

These people are not found in positions of great executive responsibility, nor in positions requiring vision and foresight, exceptional organizing ability, technical skill, great resourcefulness, fine precision, marked ingenuity, untiring enthusiasm and energy devoted to a single cause or purpose.

One might continue indefinitely to describe the occupations of slow-learners—all familiar to the reader. But this will suffice to bring to mind the place in the world of today in which these people function, and gives some background for thinking in terms of the type of education and training they need.

What are the unique qualities and characteristics of the slow-learner? It seems that the slow-learner has no qualities or characteristics not found in the so-termed normal or above-normal pupil. Rather, his

marked qualities are due to a different proportion or emphasis in his total makeup, and a difference in his mental organization. Outstanding seem to be:

First, a rigid or inflexible quality of mentality which results in inability to make practical application of ideas or conceptions acquired by reading, association with others, observing films, or contacts of some other nature. The particular experience tends to stand apart, isolated and unrelated. All of the slow-learner's educational efforts and experiences apparently tend to be something like a jig saw puzzle, the parts lying about but the builder unable, or not realizing that it is his task, to assemble them into a complete whole.

Second, once this pupil has acquired a significant body of knowledge and has made application in one instance, he is unable to generalize from this point and to expand the experience into other life situations. He may realize that he receives approbation from his teacher when he is physically clean, suitably attired, industrious and pleasant. But he does not know that these very same qualities are just as essential and must be used just as consciously in home relationships, business and employment. He seems to think that some of the facts in books he may vigorously pursue are somehow going to be the golden key to success, not knowing that habits of cleanliness, industry, integrity, kindness are priceless jewels in business, home and social relationships.

Third, the slow-learner tends to be inaccurate in his observations, confused in his conceptions, and limited in his ability to express what little knowledge he may have gleaned from an experience. His is not generally a case of being careless, sloppy, inattentive, indifferent deliberately, but of inability to pass quickly from one item to another, inability to arrange and retain detail, inability to organize, classify and interpret what he sees, and of course inability to recount satisfactorily the experience.

Fourth, the foregoing conditions contrib-

ute to another factor—emotional instability and impatience.

Fifth, the vicious circle continues and the slow-learner is accordingly more dependent upon praise, approbation and attention for success and satisfaction. He is unable to derive compensation from his own knowledge that he has fulfilled an inner urge, has created from his own intellectual resources, has made unique contribution to the great total of achievement and progress.

Sixth, this pupil is unable to set up goals and standards having their basis in deep insight into basic principles and mastery of a body of knowledge. He is unable to envision the possibilities of things to be. Rather, his goal must be a possibility in sight, attainable without too much concentration and continued effort over too long a period of time.

Seventh, a common characteristic which is also a cause, in many instances, of the slow-learner, is a lack of cultural background and social standards. These have roots in limited economic resources, with accompanying limited social and cultural experiences. The pupil's poor, limited environs and lack of opportunity to come in contact with, experience, and comprehend a better, more pleasant, more gracious kind of life, add to and accentuate his limitations.

Eighth, he may be fortunate enough to possess some particular talent of an artistic, social or mechanical nature. But this particular gift is often accompanied by grave emotional instability or erratic temperament.

Of course, no slow-learner is so unfortunate as to possess all of these peculiarities. But some combination of them will be found in each such pupil, and very likely all of them in a class of slow-learners.

*What type of education does the slow-learner need?* It is doubtful that the slow-learner needs anything educationally that is not needed by all pupils. He does not need nor can he acquire all that the very



capable must have. Highly cultural and technical courses are beyond his ability and outside his scope of needs. But he, as well as the capable pupil, must cultivate habits of industry, learn to apply knowledge and incorporate it in better habits of living, and must have some knowledge of social problems, and sympathy and understanding of humanity and its demands. So perhaps the greatest difference in the educational problem of the slow-learner and the so-called normal accelerated pupil lies in the way in which the former acquires his learning, and the methods by which he learns to apply his educational attainments.

These slow pupils should have guidance and be given experience in good living. By this is not meant the ability to make an outline from a good simple book on how living conditions have changed over a period of time, nor summarizing paragraphs describing desirable living habits, nor developing the ability to talk well on how brothers and sisters should treat one another. One can be expert in all these skills but still be vulgar, brutal, cruel, dishonest, and cheap. Our pupil needs to be taught to realize that he spends every hour in living with people, he needs to be helped to build in daily experience more desirable qualities, to be helped to regard other people as himself with motives good or bad, ideas different but as honest and sincere as his, desirous of friends and kindness just as he, and capable of response to friendly overtures just as he.

He needs to know how to select and make clothing suitable to his needs. How to select food with a knowledge of economy and value and how to prepare and serve it attractively should certainly be a part of his training. He needs to be taught how to equip a home tastefully and economically and how to create comfort, convenience and beauty from simple, durable equipment. He needs to know what habits, attitudes, dispositions and customs contribute to good family relationships.

Since modern industry and social conditions require people to work in groups, in crowded conditions and in congested districts, and to move in crowds, every person needs to learn the skills of human relationships—kindliness, tolerance, cleanliness, integrity, industry, cooperation, thoroughness, orderliness, organization and responsibility. Is there not ample opportunity in the classroom and school, and in the slow learner's daily, normal contacts, for him to consciously note and experiment in the results of the use or neglect of these qualities? In other words, can't we help him become conscious of the fact that each contact and experience is a part of his education if he makes it such?

Surely health habits and some knowledge of common diseases and their prevention and control should be a part of the education of every person. The importance of proper food, fresh air, adequate recreation, and clean, orderly surroundings in maintaining physical and mental well-being should be a part of every person's equipment for good living. Coupled with this should be some knowledge of the importance of a constructive attitude toward nature and life, the importance of a clean mental attitude toward the functions of the human body and human relationships.

The slow-learning pupil must know how people earn a livelihood in his community, how to investigate the possibilities of employment and how to equip himself for placement in business. He must understand something of changing conditions and be ready to accept new ways and new ideas and anticipate possibilities.

He should be given the opportunity in his community to grow to his greatest stature, and to realize the satisfaction of learning to assume his unique position. He should be given the experience of contributing to the social welfare of the group and he should learn to appreciate the contribution the group makes to his success and happiness. The first major experience of the child in

adjustment to the social order is his adjustment to his school. It is important that this experience be carefully planned, made and understood as a process that has many applications throughout life!

*How may this learning be achieved?* Teachers of slow-learners especially need to know a great deal about the physical, mental and emotional condition of the child, his social status, the environment in which he lives, the community from which he comes, and the companions he cultivates. These teachers also need to know the community as a whole, its occupations and the possibilities for new developments, the leisure-time activities and possibilities, the cultural pattern of the community, the social influences and interplay of social and economic influences. Surely the educational background of the community as a whole, the physical conditions of the surroundings, housing conditions, economic background and social status of the population in general are information essential to the teacher of the slow learner. Group prejudices, racial peculiarities, combinations or conflicts, religious strength or weakness, political animosities must be a part of the alert teacher's fund of knowledge.

Knowing the community and people in it, the teacher is better qualified to guide the pupil in his community contacts, experience and growth. Less time will be spent in laborious drill and discussion on meaningless subject matter. Tool subjects will be taught more in conjunction with actual experience and will be used in attaining present objectives rather than deferred values.

The pupil will always be impressed with the idea that his education is directed solely to the end of helping him learn how to live, think, and behave better. Each experience will be undertaken for the purpose of making a change in him. That desired change will be agreed upon before the project is launched, and the pupil will be able to judge for himself the meaning,

purpose and results of the experience.

By the school journey or excursion into the community the pupil will gain meaningful education through actual experience. This journey must of course be definitely planned and arranged for the purpose of allowing the pupil to gain specific knowledge, make significant contacts, develop the power of observing and reporting, discover how this experience fits into his total life situation, and evaluate the experience in terms of what it has done to him and the group and how each can use it.

This excursion may be made by an entire class and the teacher, and probably will be until the pupil has learned how to enter into such work more independently. It may be made by a small group and an adult leader, findings to be carried back to the entire group. It may be made independently by a small group of pupils. The important point is that there be a definite reason for the trip, a specific purpose in mind, significant findings to be made, reports and evaluations to be arrived at.

The problem of what areas of experience these young people should explore is pertinent. It seems that they need guidance in arriving at a better understanding of and more satisfactory experience in: family relationships, homemaking, food selection and preparation, clothing equipment, personal appearance, social contacts, health habits (physical and mental), recreational activities, cultural assets, employment equipment, communication in its broadest meaning, transportation in its different phases, philosophy of life, and governmental functions and processes. In finding ways of satisfying these needs, the pupil uses knowledge of and experience in all phases of community life.

Can each pupil make personal contacts with such community facilities as these:

Libraries, museums, police and fire departments, city council, city hall, parks, playgrounds, community centers, churches, YWCA, YMCA, federal offices, local, federal

and state offices, city offices, banks, other schools and school exhibits, colleges, universities, business schools, other educational institutions, broadcasting stations, movies, telephone building, hotels, restaurants, water storage plants, sewage disposal plants, industrial plants, refineries, packing plants, newspaper plants, bakeries, laundries, railroad shops, department stores, garages, beauty parlors, barber shops, dairies, greenhouses, poultry farms, truck farms, filling stations, large markets, nearest store, corner drugstore, hospitals, professional offices, union station, bus stations, airport, construction work, unusual phenomena, community groups, clubs, organizations, employment agencies, and individual citizens outstanding for specific achievements?

Observe this list carefully and you will realize that many of these contacts are made of necessity in daily experience. Many others, if not all, may be brought into the pupil's experience sometime during his school career. Certainly by taking advantage of reports made by pupils interested in different phases of community life, and by using films, visual aids, and visiting speakers, all interests of the slow learner's community life may be explored and broadened.

What such efforts in classwork mean to pupils can best be described by the pupils themselves:

"Since I have been in this class, I have learned how to cooperate and work with others. How to create things with my hands, and make my mind and hands work together. I have learned ways in which to spend my leisure time, and how to plan things. I have learned how to conduct myself in class, whether or not the teacher is in the room. When I first came here I didn't know how to express myself, when

called on in class, I couldn't think of words to say. Now I have gained self-confidence and have learned how to give expression to my ideas. I have learned how to meet people, I have learned how to dress properly and what colors and styles to wear to different things. I have learned how to conduct myself at home as well as in public, and I have also learned not to say things that hurt anyone whether it is a truth or a lie."

"In studying crime I learned many ways I could change myself to become a better citizen. Also how little ways of my own could be changed very easily to a criminal's ways. Our teacher talked to us on crime which also helped change me to be better around our home, in public and in school."

"In studying current events I learned many ways of the lives of others. Many ways of foreign peoples lives. Many difficulties of war and democracy. How war begins and how it ends. I learned many of the trades of American and foreign countries. I learned how many foreign families live and how hard it is for them to keep on living. It was then I realized how lucky I am to be an American citizen and to live in America."

"Learning how to make all of these things in school helps you during your vacation when you just can't think of anything to do you can work on some of the things we've learned to do without going to any great expense but it keeps you out of mischief and you can have a lot of fun doing it as well as learning from it."

For the teacher such teaching means more hours of work, more difficulties to surmount, obstacles to overcome, discouragements to laugh off. But in many respects it opens up new fields of experience, it is always challenging, and above all it is more gratifying in results.



### *Classroom Movie Error*

A large number of the motion pictures shown in classrooms result in very little learning because they are shown at the wrong time, in an unrelated

setting and in the absence of clearly understood and accepted instructional objectives.—JAMES HAROLD FOX in *School and Society*.

# THE EDUCATIONAL WHIRL

*A department of satire and sharp comment*

Contributors: EFFA E. PRESTON, CARR SANDERS, CECELIA LODGE,  
ALAN WHYTE, FRANK I. GARY, R. ELIZABETH REYNOLDS, and LOIS  
STEWART

In the present crisis there may be an important message for our schools, but what's the use of hand-writing on the wall if nobody can read? E. E. P.

## Convention Thrills

1. To find at a teacher association meeting that the only reason why the teachers were to be asked to make suggestions for the next convention was because it would not give them the privilege of saying they were not asked.

2. The disgust one feels when he goes to an organization meeting and finds the most toadied-to speaker is a notorious promoter of legislative lobbies.

3. To find your organization has sold the lists of teachers' names and addresses to the various political parties so they may work on you better and clutter your mails with any sort of advertising.

C. S.

## Ear to the Ground

1. "Miss Jones, you shouldn't give the children in your class a party. It reflects on the rest of us who can't afford to!"

2. "I'm not paid to help Ralph with his English, even though he is in my homeroom. I'm hired as a geography teacher."

3. "I'd rather teach the low sections; I don't have to think of so many projects."

4. "We'll have to give the preference to Miss Kramer. Her father controls the third ward."

5. "You're a sucker to be paying for that child's

lunch. What if they do get \$8 a week for seven in the family? It's not your problem, is it?"

6. "We didn't have our classroom radio when the program went on. The president of the board borrowed it so his secretary could listen to the baseball scores."

7. "Alex doesn't know the constitution from the Declaration of Independence. Those seventh-grade teachers certainly lie down on the job."

8. "I'm very much opposed to married teachers being employed. . . . Oh, yes, Mrs. Lewis is the best teacher I have."

9. "Why do I take my classes into New York? Between you and me that's publicity toward the next raise."

C. L.

*Heard in the Faculty Room:* "Gosh, it'd be nice to be a principal," exclaimed Clem Shrewdy. "Just think! If I were principal of this school I could leave early every Friday afternoon—instead of racing my kids to the door."

A. W.

## Susie Invents a Method

Susie failed in her arithmetic test.

In a conference, Susie's teacher remarked, "Susie, I've gone over your paper and I simply don't understand your work. You haven't learned the methods that I taught you."

"But, Mizz Bates," insisted Susie, "Ise done has a method—if the first number guzinto the second, Ise divides—if it don't, Ise multiplies." F. I. G.

## The 8 Commandments

A prominent writer has formulated twelve commandments, which makes him two up on Moses. We have a few of our own, for teachers:

1. Think at least once a week. Don't let jumping at conclusions be your only mental exercise.

2. Be polite to your superiors; remember you're just as unimportant as they are.

3. Don't be discouraged if you can't reach the

EDITOR'S NOTE: Among the contributors to this department are superintendents, high-school principals, and teachers. The educators whose writings appear here almost invariably have a serious point to make, but have chosen satire and humor as more effective methods of making that point. The editors of THE CLEARING HOUSE do not necessarily endorse the points of view expressed here.



top; you can always sit at the bottom and make excuses and you'll have lots of good company.

4. Never forget there are two sides to every pedagogical question—yours and the wrong one.

5. Everybody makes mistakes but be careful not to lay all of yours in one basket.

6. Keep in mind that it isn't where the educational theory comes from that counts—it's how it works when it gets there.

7. Don't sneer at plodders. It's always the mechanical rabbit that wins the race, not the greyhound.

8. Don't despair if your young lone eagles grow up to be middle-aged buzzards in bad company. Keep on saying, "Civilization is just around the corner."

E. E. P.

And what has become of the old-fashioned principal who had an easy chair in the faculty room that no one else dared sit in when he was around, not even—the head janitor?

F. I. G.

### Compliment

"It isn't what people say, it's the way they say it that counts" certainly applies to school teaching.

Having her students write letters of appreciation to persons in the building who had made worthwhile contributions to the school was the means one teacher took of making letter writing more interesting.

A boy who chose to compliment a teacher for writing a play which was presented on an assembly program wrote, "Such a grand thought could not be created by a normal-minded person".

R. E. R.

### Man to Man

Superintendent Stoopsnagle had just addressed a group of his peers at their annual conference. And in righteous eloquence he had made it quite clear that he would fire, without further comment, any woman on his faculty who had the filthy habit of smoking. . . .

After the meeting Superintendent Stoopsnagle met Superintendent Podunkleburg, and here is the conversation we heard:

"Great speech you made, Clarence. Yes, sir, a great speech."

"Thank you, George, thank yooooou."

"Yes, Clarence, and I especially agree with you on the matter of women teachers smoking. A bad influence. Yes sir, a very bad influence."

"Yes, George, it is a bad influence—a very bad influence."

There is a brief pause and then—

"Darn these see-gars Annie bought me for Christmas! Er—got a Rio-Tan on you, George?"

"Man to man, I sure have, Clarence."

"Nothing like the right seegar, I say. Eh, George?"

L. S.

### Bon Mot

The attitude of the modern high school lad and lassie toward their teachers is so different from the attitude of youngsters in my day that I frequently find myself a bit breathless over their remarks.

At the same table with me in a restaurant one Sunday noon sat a boy who is in one of my classes, his mother, and his sister. During the meal we chatted about numerous things, but we mentioned school only incidentally. When the members of the family were leaving, my pupil bowed low, smiled and said, "I hope we meet under pleasant circumstances again."

R. E. R.

### Another Language

When Cedric Topping started his English teaching career at Median High School, Homer Witmark shook his head and muttered, "Where'n the heck did the principal dig *that* up?"

A few weeks later, Homer burst into the faculty room. "Just passed by Topping's classroom. He's having trouble in getting his class to study Shakespeare seriously. You should've heard him bawling them out. It was a classic. But the kids didn't understand the words—why, they applauded when he sat down!"

F. I. G.

We heard by the sour-grapevine system that a wave of commonsense may sweep our schools. Well, they can certainly stand a good sweeping.

E. E. P.

### Lonely Hearts Stuff

Why do so many principals attempt to run a matrimonial bureau for their unmarried teachers?

And why, when they fail in attempts to secure the women husbands from eligible men around town, do they settle down to the dull routine of matching male and female faculty members—regardless of age? Or willingness?

C. S.

# Poetry CAN be taught to 35 ASSORTED PUPILS

By CHARLES I. GLICKSBERG

THE FIRST PRINCIPLE to observe in teaching poetry is to have the courage to depart from the order of the textbook. The pupils must be free to rove, to experiment, to engage in "forbidden" and unexpected aesthetic and intellectual adventures.

In the reading and enjoyment of poetry, it is death to remain a pedagogic fundamentalist. Therefore, when the occasion warrants it, down with the literal text, the prescribed course of study. The price of originality is freedom.

The second step is more difficult to achieve. A group of thirty-five young people enters the classroom. What are their compelling interests? From what deep fountain do they draw nourishment, vision, inspiration? How to slough off the thick, hard skin of convention that envelops them? How make them see with the innocent eye? How make them feel as children feel, with sincerity and naturalness and spontaneity? How break the strangling hold of words, words, words—stereotyped, divorced from reality, cut off from the roots of experience?

Pupils must be made to realize that life is a mystery, a dream within a dream. Only when thus prepared and conditioned can they approach poetry with a pure heart and

understanding mind. Only thus can they gird themselves for the painful and ecstatic self-emancipation that the writing of poetry brings.

All poetry springs from the suffering, sensitive self. Adolescents bear their own cross; they interpret the human and sensuous world in their own unaccountable way. Hence the appeal, in the beginning at least, must be made in terms of the life they have known, the things they have felt, touched, seen, experienced. Only later can their range of vision and their grasp of reality be extended. In the beginning it is best to establish rapport by accepting them as they are, with all their limitations and imperfections, their "correct", conventional standards, their distrust of all intense expressions of feeling, their tough-minded, practical skepticism.

If the ice that has frozen their vital spirit is to be thawed it cannot be done by the approved pedagogic methods: recitations, outlines, analyses. Sympathy comes first—sympathy and a sunny, friendly patience. One must have faith that in the end they will come through. The ice on the river will break, the spring will come, the seeds of growth will energetically reach towards the light. The pupils cannot long resist the voice of truth or the enchantment of beauty. Once they hear the music, they will begin to dance.

Teachers must also be prepared to receive trash and nonsense and stilted rhymes, and treat them with good-natured tolerance. It is imperative that the marking system be held in abeyance. Any attempt to grade these "creative" productions will throttle the genuine lyrical cry. Words of encour-

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *For some years Mr. Glicksberg has been promoting creative work by his pupils by defying the prescribed English course of study and throwing the usual conventional methods out the window. In this article he explains how he draws his pupils out, and encourages them to write freely. The author teaches English in South Side High School, Newark, N.J.*

agement mixed with casual critical comments will work more wonders than pedantic severity.

Above all, it is important that an informal atmosphere be established in the classroom, an atmosphere of camaraderie and good will. No one is too humble, too inarticulate, too crude a craftsman to receive a hearing. The personality of each one, no matter how recessive or difficult, is respected and—if that is not too much to ask of the harassed teacher—held in reverence.

For this reason it is desirable that the poems of pupils be read anonymously. The young are shy, touchy, extremely sensitive on this score. They must not be exposed to the danger of public ridicule, or else their most intimate confidences will not be revealed. It is also necessary that the poems be read with all the vocal effectiveness that the teacher can command. The good must be praised heartily; the bad charitably overlooked.

The teacher must try to make each pupil feel that he is personally interested in what the pupil has to contribute. A word of appreciation after class will go a long way. Proof that this method of encouraging self-expression has taken effect will appear when the pupils, hesitantly at first but later in growing numbers, voluntarily submit their manuscripts for critical inspection.

The teacher must have genuine faith in the creative potentialities of youth. When they come to him with complaints that they cannot write, he must strive to be sympathetic and understanding, but he must remain adamant to their plea that he suggest themes for them to write about. Let them dig, let them explore and make reconnaissance flights. Let them yield themselves to the forces of the unconscious. If they are sufficiently intrepid and persistent, they will bring back rich spoils.

The requests for suggested topics is a characteristic student evasion, a comfortable relapsing into the old father-dominated pedagogic method of conducting classes. It

must be abandoned. When youth comes of creative age, he must fend for himself and slay the dragon without even the benefit of a magic word.

If freedom means anything, it means that the pupils are free to reject, condemn, dislike any of the poetry offered them, without for that reason being treated to a sermon or receiving a frown of disapprobation. There is no need, also, of arguing the point. Each man to his own taste—that must be the guiding principle.

No invidious comparisons must be made with the achievements of the traditional poets. The incubus of history, the dead weight of the preserved cultural heritage, must be lifted. Poetry must be a means of growth and emancipation; it must not induce a feeling of weary helplessness. The pupil must not acquire the feeling that all the songs have been sung, all the beauty of the world captured and put into words. Never mind, in this connection, what Shakespeare or Shelley or Keats once wrote. It is the work of the pupils that is of primary interest and importance.

If poetry springs out of deep and significant emotional experiences, it is the function of the school to provide as many opportunities as possible for rich and varied living. Let pupils drink at the fountainhead. In the classroom, of course, only vicarious experiences can be presented: discussion of vital news and issues; the reading of poems recently published, humorous or serious in nature; group analyses of problems of interest to the community or the world at large. But outside of the classroom many worthwhile, first-hand experiences can be provided: trips, outings, visits to prison, slums, housing projects, factories, newspaper plants, airports, and so on.

It must be understood at the outset that these experiences are not to be used for future poetry assignments, otherwise the spontaneous spirit of such projects is destroyed. However, if a pupil spontaneously bursts into song on a theme sug-

gested by or drawn from such an experience, what teacher will stop him?

Above all, self-expression must be the aim sought, the goal to be attained. For poetic expression grows out of harmonious and integrated personality development. That is the justification, the fruit, and the crown of a course devoted to poetry. That is its "pragmatic" sanction.

## II

Primitive man saw with the innocent eye. He caught the vividness, the wonder, the strangeness of objects and events: the concreteness of a given tree—not tree in general. All language that is imaginative and alive is consequently poetic in nature. If we had the power of embodying our feelings, our reactions in all their poignancy and depth, their color and sharpness, we would speak as the poets write. That is why Croce contends that poetry does not employ a special language. It is present in varying degrees in all language. It is present in primitive myths, in the imaginings of the child, in the speculation of religion.

What is characteristic of the aesthetic? That it is a state of psychological balance. While in this mood we are receptive to impressions; we are for the moment exempt from the tyranny of the practical; we enjoy the object for its own sake, without stopping to wonder how we can put it to use.

It is this quality of autonomous enjoyment—beauty is its own excuse for being—which many pupils find difficulty in achieving. Young as they are, they have become hopelessly conventional in attitude. Their values are, generally speaking, the values of the social group of which they are a part or of the social group with which they wish to identify themselves. Their appraisal of any experience is based on this crude test: Where will it get me? What benefit will I derive from it? A football game is exhilarating; reading a poem is a waste of time because it reaches no culmination; it doesn't *do* anything.

How can the teacher combat and overcome this obstructive mental set? How can he condition pupils so that they will for the time being surrender to the aesthetic contagion and allow the practical and cognitive activity to lapse? How shall he encourage them to enjoy the aesthetic experience for its own sake?

This does not mean that the art of poetry has no relation to reality, that it casts no revealing light on the world and on life as we know them. On the contrary, if there were no such correspondence of the aesthetic and the real, then art for its own sake would be entirely justified. Poetry does refer to life. Language not only evokes emotions, it also precipitates meaning, it suggests the sensuousness of reality. That is its imaginative function and effect. So that poetry can be understood as well as enjoyed; indeed, enjoyment is enhanced by this act of understanding.

## III

Teaching is essentially an art, not a science. Each day in the classroom is an exciting adventure, a voyage on uncharted, unfathomed seas. It is difficult to convince the young and ambitious pedagogue that no amount of mechanical lesson-planning can anticipate the surprises that suddenly spring up in the course of an hour. And it is these deviations from the prepared routine, these unforeseen detours, these startling projections of hungry, individual minds for knowledge, guidance, certitude, which form the delight and the reward of teaching. If there is no communion of minds, there may have been teaching but there was no learning.

A good teacher knows how to learn along with his pupils; they are his sounding board, the players in his symphonic orchestra, and he is intuitively aware of any dissonance, any failure to bring forth the desired effect.

At the most dull and depressing moment, something will happen which clears the atmosphere instantly. Heads are curiously



lifted, eyes begin to shine, the electricity of challenging thought begins to flow. One girl throws out the question: How is it possible to communicate what one imagines to other people? How is it possible to find the words which will make them see and feel exactly what one sees and feels?

This is a profound and searching query; it goes to the heart of the problem of communication. Yet these pupils, who had received no training in aesthetic criticism, were able to appreciate the difficulties inherent in the task of appreciation, and to arrive at a sensible conclusion: namely, that whereas the correspondence between what is communicated and what is received is not, of course, exact, human beings are mentally and constitutionally enough alike to make communication possible. Were this not so, we could not speak with any hope of understanding. Our griefs and joys, our hopes and ideas and beliefs would arouse no answering response in the listener. The fact that our words do elicit the expected response seems to indicate that communication has been achieved.

Then, again without warning, a pupil made this public confession. A puzzled frown was on his face as he declared, "I am an excellent student of science, and I also enjoy poetry, but what I read in poetry does not square with what I learn in science. Frequently I am confused. I like poetry, but my mind tells me that it doesn't speak the truth. The result is I am frequently at odds with myself."

This precipitated a lively and profitable discussion on the relation between poetry and science, the distinction between literal and symbolic truth.

Out of this discussion emerged another perception, namely, that the idea of a poem is not the same thing by far as the poem itself. One pupil, it seems, had complained that *The Rubáiyát* was a tedious repetition of a single theme. Why couldn't the poet have condensed his meaning into a few stanzas and allowed it to go at that?

To this a pupil replied that if that were the case, it would be a simple matter to outline the central idea of the poems in the textbook and in lieu of reading them provide the class with a convenient digest. Would this serve the purpose? No! The majority agreed that poetry possesses a beauty which is more than its literal and prosaic paraphrase, and that it is this beauty which makes poetry important.

On still another occasion, a pupil complained that poetry bewildered her because one poem seemed to contradict what another poem affirmed. For example, Longfellow in "The Psalm of Life" maintained that dust to dust was not spoken of the soul, that life was real, life was earnest, whereas Omar Khayyám insisted that death was the end and that we should strive to enjoy life to the utmost in the brief span allotted us. How resolve this apparent contradiction?

After a few moments of intense concentration, the class concluded that this diversity of attitude and belief was unavoidable; poetry was written by different poets, each with his own philosophy of life. Truth was not fixed and final. People hold all sorts of views; they have all kinds of experiences and interpret them in different ways.

#### IV

If pupils demand to know what *good* poetry serves, it is not enough, by a long shot, to enter upon a philosophical disquisition, demonstrating that the way they frame their question presupposes a body of values which are narrowly materialistic. Grounds more relative than this must be discovered if their doubts are to be resolved, their skepticism overcome. For if anything is true, it is obvious that their question springs from no heckling spirit nor does it arise from a desire to loaf, to avoid responsibility. Their sincerity must be taken for granted.

The problem must be faced frankly. If the teacher has succeeded in establishing a democratic atmosphere in the classroom, he

will give pupils in his class the opportunity to voice their dislike of poetry. Logical arguments on his part will make little headway. Enjoyment and appreciation of poetry just cannot be cultivated in that manner.

Poetry's the thing; it must justify itself. It must speak with the tongue of angels, it must set the feet tapping, the pulses racing, it must quicken the imagination and set the gypsy mind a-roving. It must have the power of making pupils attempt compositions of their own. If poetry does that, then their question will be answered.

The quest of beauty is rendered vital and significant when it becomes an intrinsic part of the pupil's way of life. Whether he is conscious of it or not, the adolescent is a lover of beauty, only he seeks it in a manner both confused and disorganized. He reaches out blindly for new experiences, deep emotions. Poetry can direct this life-giving impulse towards more fruitful and liberating channels.

If the promise of American life is to bear fruit, even for the underprivileged child must the reward of beauty be forthcoming. They must be enabled to see with their own eyes the vision of a better and more gracious life. Once Beauty is for them a genuine and moving experience, the quality of their living will be vastly improved.

For the perception of Beauty has this

saving quality: It intensifies and enriches the zest for life, the enjoyment of experience in all its immediacy and for its own sake. The aesthetic experience is no longer associated with the precious and the exotic; it becomes a way of life. The young are then able to perceive beauty everywhere, in the objects and people and events that form their environment. They catch authentic glimpses of the redeeming truth that there is no experience open to the human organism which cannot form the subject matter of poetry.

But if the quality of beauty is to be communicated, the method of teaching must strive to be unacademic. Poetry cannot be taught according to the old standards. It must be lived in order to be known. It must be an organic experience, emotionalized as well as intellectualized. Poetry gives expression to what many pupils feel inchoately and inarticulately: the irony and disappointments, the misery and tragedy and contradictoriness of human existence.

The pupils are still too young to formulate a consistent and comprehensive philosophy of their own, and the aim of poetry is certainly not to provide a substitute. Its goal is to make them more sensitive, more imaginative, more humane and discriminating. And this poetry can achieve by giving expression to the amazing complexity, the inherent mysteriousness, of life.



### *War and Health*

Wars have always been detrimental to national health, but at the same time they have been a stimulus to physical improvement. The health of a people should be of concern at all times but nations have taken a new interest in this matter in times of conflict. . . .

Present national stress stimulates to renewed efforts for national (which means individual) fitness. This requires adequate teacher training for health education; the better management of school

feeding; the development of medical and nursing services which, while broadly effective in a few States, are exceedingly spotty in others; provision for physical activity, and finally, competent supervision in all of these fields. We believe that educators will rise to the occasion and correct their shortcomings especially in high schools in which there is too often a glaring neglect of provision for health examinations and for health instruction.—JAMES FREDERICK ROGERS in *School Life*.

“AW NUTS!

*So we made each teacher  
a vocational specialist*

## Another Guidance Period!”

By HARRY H. RICHMAN

**A**W NUTS, another guidance period! We sure have to put up with a lot of tripe in school these days. What with guidance periods, club periods, education nights, meetings, PTA, operettas, and Lord knows what else, they hardly give you a chance to get down to real teaching.”

Did you ever hear this “song and dance” whenever a group of teachers get together? It seems to be a pretty common complaint from teachers who still teach subjects rather than pupils. As for this guidance that they grumble about so bitterly, I’ve seen some of the loudest complainers doing, quite unwittingly, an outstanding job of guiding, and doing it in homerooms, in halls, and in classrooms. We’re all teaching guidance all the time, and that’s as it should be.

The rebellion isn’t at guidance, but at teaching the more formal “occupational information”. Guidance directors everywhere have been faced by the problem of how to teach this facet of their guidance programs. Should each homeroom teacher teach all the occupations and keep abreast of all the changes and transitions in the world of work? It has been tried and often found wanting, for it takes a near genius to do so vast a job well. Shall we hire specialists to do it? That also has been tried, and any administrator can point out many obvious disadvantages.

Yet any guidance director knows that pupils are entitled to an understanding and

a conception of the many occupational fields, the opportunities, requirements and disadvantages in each. They also know that to put this vital material across, they must first get the enthusiasm and cooperation of the faculty. The teachers must do it and in such a way that it no longer seems just another period assignment.

At Lafayette Junior High School in Elizabeth, we’ve tried to do just that. The teachers are doing the job, and in a way which makes it far more interesting for them. Almost every teacher has either worked at, been interested in, or has dreamed of becoming something outside of his own teaching profession. On this fact we have capitalized and built our program. We have said to each teacher, “What field are you interested in? Can you whip up a good lesson in which you can discuss with facts and figures such things as earning power, health conditions, advancement opportunities, social status, necessary qualifications, necessary character traits and personality, and future outlook for that field of endeavor? And are you a good enough teacher to adjust this lesson to boys and girls, low level groups as well as high ones?”

In Lafayette Junior High School each teacher selects his own occupation, and during the seventh period, each Tuesday, a different class arrives in his room. The whole school rotates so that every teacher meets every class and each class meets all teachers during the year. Much of the monotony is eliminated in this way, and much of the zest remains. If we should teach occupations, why not teach them in a pleasant, effective way? It really works.

—■—  
EDITOR’S NOTE: Mr. Richman is guidance counselor of the Lafayette Junior High School, Elizabeth, N.J.

# 24 Projects of Our STUDENT COUNCIL

By  
WILLIAM J. HAGENY

IN THE recent New York State Regents' Inquiry volume, *Education for Citizenship*, the author, Dr. Howard E. Wilson,<sup>1</sup> reports a visit to a New York State central rural school, called Marswood. The published report used fictitious names for the schools studied and Marswood is, in reality, the Haldane Central School of Cold Spring-on-Hudson, New York.

The survey and tests at Marswood and other schools in 1937 supported one of the most important conclusions of the report, that "*for entire school systems a surprisingly close relationship prevails between the general level of enthusiasm manifested for the student government and the extent of endorsement given the fundamental tenets of American democracy.*" The report further states that "only a few schools in this survey rise to the level of giving pupils actual experience in the assumption of important responsibility. Among the schools of this type, Clovertown and Marswood are definitely

superior to any of the schools observed."

In the manner of the Lynds in their survey of Middletown, a report is made herewith on the status of student government at Haldane four years after the survey.

The Haldane High School follows, more or less, the standardized organization for student association groups. The basis of the organization is the homeroom, with the pupils of each homeroom electing a representative to the student council and the entire student body electing the president and vice-president of the student association. There are absolutely no scholastic restrictions of any kind on the candidates, nor is there any sort of a review of the candidates by the principal or faculty. All pupils of the junior-senior high school and the faculty are members of the Student Association, and all are entitled to vote for the president and vice-president.

The Student Council has a competent, tactful faculty sponsor (who does not have veto power), and a faculty treasurer of pupil accounts, in conformance with the New York State Education Department's financial regulations.

An important group allied to the Student Council, which is the legislative body, is the Student Court, composed of the president and the vice-president of the Student Association and the faculty sponsor.

The constitution of the Student Associa-

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EDITOR'S NOTE: *At the present time it is being charged that student government in many high schools is not all that it is cracked up to be. It is not as democratic as the prescription specified. It does not give pupils as much experience in the assumption of important responsibilities as it should. This article upon the student-government activities of Haldane High School, Cold Spring, N. Y., is therefore particularly timely. Mr. Hageny is supervising principal of the school.*

<sup>1</sup> Wilson, Howard E., *Education for Citizenship, a Report of the Regents' Inquiry into the Character and Cost of Public Education in the State of New York*. New York: McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1938.



tion is printed in the annual school handbook, and there is a set of by-laws which further clarify the generalities of the constitution.

This clarification is extremely important. It is at this point that a good many student-government enterprises fail. It is important that the actual fields of jurisdiction of student government, faculty, and administration be laid out and limited. The faculty cannot surrender the entire management of the school to the pupils and then sincerely follow them wherever they may go. The administration is, in the final analysis, responsible to the Board of Education, who have been elected by the entire school district in a thoroughly democratic manner.

In taking inventory of the student-government organization at Haldane at this time, two basic rules should be stressed. First, administrators and teachers should not delude themselves into thinking that young people can be fooled. Second, administrators and teachers should avoid using the student government as a chore-doing and errand-running device. Such difficulties can be avoided by a clear and sincere statement of policy by the school, covering the actual fields in which the student government officers have jurisdiction. Thus committed, the administration must then support the pupils in all their successes and failures and must permit them to make mistakes and profit by them.

Some of the projects which our Student Council has undertaken recently follow:

1. The council drew up a set of regulations for the use of the auditorium by pupils.
2. It obtained and supervised the use of a bus for pupils going to school football games.
3. It set up regulations and rules for traffic control in the building.
4. It investigated the handling of lockers and obtained several changes in locker regulations.
5. It obtained, bought, and awarded baseball, football, cheerleader and manager awards.
6. It set up rules and regulations for school dancing.
7. It investigated and organized a new plan for dismissal from assembly.
8. It investigated and got permission for noontime dancing on Wednesdays.
9. It prepared copies of minutes of Student Council meetings for the use of every homeroom.
10. It set up a Building Inspection Committee for supervision of homerooms and lockers.
11. It established and maintained a Lost and Found department for the school.
12. It set up a clothing and food fund for needy pupils.
13. It devised a form for giving permission to school organizations to hold events.
14. It supervised pupil discussions prior to the adoption of a standard graduation ring and carried on a contest to determine a proper crest for the ring.
15. It purchased orchestrations for the school orchestra.
16. It investigated the bicycle problem at school and purchased a bicycle rack for pupils.
17. It aided in the financial backing of the senior annual.
18. It acted as financial agent in making loans to various school clubs and activities.
19. It purchased uniforms for cheerleaders.
20. It supervised the awards of pins and letters to various school clubs.
21. It purchased raincoats and flashlights for the Service Club.
22. It supervised the selling of Student Association tickets.
23. It sponsored the formation of a student government organization in a neighboring school.
24. For the past two years it has organized a community Halloween Parade for the purpose of helping to prevent petty destruction and nuisance acts by pupils.

The last project deserves additional explanation. It is important because it is an example of how the school Student Council can work out projects in the community as well as in the school. This Halloween project was of the same type that is carried out by Kiwanis, Rotary, and Lions Clubs in many parts of the country each year. Its chief point of interest is that the pupils who were supposed to be diverted from malicious mischief by the Halloween Parade, with its prizes, candy, etc., were the group who initiated and carried out the project.

The council canvassed the community and obtained donations to buy parade flares, crackerjacks and ice cream, and prizes for contestants. It set up judging rules, secured judges, got the cooperation of the American Legion, set up the public-address system, and made the project a big success.

Each of these activities in itself is not an epoch-making event, but the processes incidental to making a decision on each one brought into play all of the factors which we think are important in the democratic way of life, such as free discussion and decision by the vote of the majority.

Several beliefs concerning the Student Council have come into being since the inception of the organization. Some of them follow:

Believing that one of the most common failures of pupil government in schools is the fact that the proceedings and work of the council are usually too remote from the pupils, the Haldane High School organization attempts to bring the rank and file pupil into close contact with his chosen representative by the device of typing and mimeographing the minutes of the Student Council meetings. These minutes are written up in a more extensive form than the secretary's usual report and a copy of the minutes is given to each homeroom, where it is read and discussed.

We decided that to make the Student Council important to the pupils themselves, not to be regarded as just another whim

of the faculty, the Board of Education should be asked to incorporate in the by-laws of the district, recognition of the rights and duties of the pupil government. This the Board agreed to do.

Since we believe that the best degree of pupil cooperation can be obtained if regulations come from the pupils and without compulsion from school authorities, Haldane pupils are encouraged to adopt many of the rules and regulations governing their conduct.

In the belief that a well-managed and well-controlled financial system goes hand in hand with good organization, several years ago the Haldane Student Association set up a financial system which needed to be changed only in small detail to meet the recent regulations of the New York State Education Department on financial control of extracurricular activity funds.

We feel that one of the most important objectives of a student government organization in the school is to direct the attention of the pupils to the desirable qualities of leaders. Therefore a period of study during homeroom sessions on the qualities and characteristics of the candidates for Student Council representatives is undertaken before election day. Sometimes this is done by using a scoring form to draw the attention of the pupils to the necessary qualities for good leadership.

In concluding this reexamination of the pupil government organization at Haldane, it cannot be said that such a system is a panacea to solve all of the problems of the world or of a school, but that in the experience of this school it has definitely aided the morale of our student body. Also, within the range of the Regents' Inquiry study, it apparently has encouraged our pupils to participate in civic affairs, and has fostered in them a respect and endorsement of the fundamental tenets of American democracy. Perhaps it has helped us make our education for democracy more effective rather than exhortative.

# HANDWRITING:

My 8th-grade pupils resented penmanship  
until I trapped their lagging interest

By  
ELAINE BROWNE

THE SECOND *R* in readin', 'ritin', and 'rithmetic may add a lot of zest to a song, but when it comes to a group of thirty-some eighth-grade boys arbitrarily assigned to a class in penmanship, there is no gainsaying their expression, "It's a flop." But here they were—every seat fairly bulging with a boy eager to express in attitude if not in word his resentment of a subject so closely allied to effeminacy.

Surveyed individually or compositely the problem presented the same acute aspects: Coordinations that were keenly attuned to football but rebelled at a pen; muscles that were timed to adolescent activities, but refused to sense the intricacies of fine writing; responses antagonistic and interest a negative quantity except in the progress of the clock.

As the fundamentals of penmanship were presented to the boys day after day their interest broadened only in one direction—"get it done with and do something else". Almost invariably the diversion that they enjoyed during the closing moments of the period resulted in drawings conspicuously lacking in artistic merit but apparently most gratifying to the producers. Caricatures there were, perhaps—who knows—of penmanship teachers.



EDITOR'S NOTE: *This article explains a motivating scheme that turned the author's roomful of rebels against pen and ink into ardent worshippers. Miss Browne teaches in the Junior High School at Chehalis, Wash. Her manuscript was properly typewritten, but her accompanying letter was a nice example of chirography.*

It may have been an inspiration or it may have been what is often grimly labeled the mother of invention, but the thought persisted: Since interest and learning are so closely allied—why not try this . . . ?

And so it was that one morning the class beheld on the blackboard space heretofore dedicated to traditional and dignified writing drills, the following from Edward Lear's *Nonsense Book*:

There was an Old Man of Berlin,  
Whose form was uncommonly thin;  
Till he once, by mistake,  
Was mixed up in a cake,  
So they baked that Old Man of Berlin.

The innovation was fairly embraced with enthusiasm when the boys learned that they were to illustrate, not copy, the rhyme. The old man of Berlin became suddenly alive and cakes of every description appeared in record time. The crowning achievement came from a boy who had evinced a particular dislike for writing. It was a radiant birthday cake, resplendent with candles. Within its delectable interior the old man of Berlin was comfortably ensconced, his feet projecting in a graceful manner and his head triumphantly protruding among the candles. As a final flash of artistic prowess, a candle rose bright and gleaming from the dome of his head. Expressions of satisfaction and delight ensued from every corner as the numerous creations appeared.

It was a pedagogical triumph eagerly seized when the question came spontaneously, "Is it all right to copy the verse under it?" My answer of feigned indifference did not dampen the enthusiasm that spread rampantly among the group. Boys began writing, eagerly, painstakingly form-

ing each letter as artistically as awkward muscles would permit. A new interest in writing arose. The copied verse must be a credit to the artistic production. Occasional requests were made, "May I have another piece of paper?" The protest, "But your picture is so good," was scarcely completed before the counter remark was made, "I want to fix the writing."

It may have been a coincidence, but the boy who presented the school's chief discipline problem was given the honor of arranging certain of the papers on a bulletin board where they would be accessible to the student body. With the critical eye of a connoisseur he selected the papers from day to day, and for the first time in his school experience he became somewhat of an oracle among his classmates. They, in turn, realizing that the writing would be examined as critically as the pictures, developed skill and precision through the consistent effort to attain a standard established by one of their members.

Occasionally Edward Lear's rhymes were supplemented by some of pupil imagina-

tion. These were enthusiastically received, particularly by the originator, who could generally be seen during intermission periods furtively observing the hilarity that radiated from the class bulletin board's vicinity.

All this in retrospect. In a world of increased mechanization, handwriting will continue to play a minor role. Speed and legibility will remain the primary objectives while artistry of letter forms is relegated to the background. Perhaps it is the human values that are of greater moment. The light in the eye, the quickening of the spirit may be worth far more than a rating on a standardized scale. A recent visit to a home on an invitation to inspect an airplane model revealed in the room of the youthful inventor the usual hodgepodge of adolescent treasures. Among them, conspicuously displayed, were two illustrations with accompanying rhymes, somewhat frayed and dimmed, but retaining still a semblance of their former glory—"The Poddle Who Has No Toes" and "The Dong with a Luminous Nose".



## Recently They Said:

### *The Camel's Back*

A poorly prepared pupil, with an I.Q. of about 90, with hardly any intellectual interests, desirous of obtaining any kind of employment upon completing his high-school course, can be taught to divide  $2x^3 + 21 + 5x - 10x^2$  by  $x-3$ , but at what expenditure of time and labor and what a sacrifice of instructional material that would be so much more profitable to this type of pupil!—BENJAMIN BRAVERMAN in *The Mathematics Teacher*.

### *The Big Difference*

Perhaps you have heard that you must be cautious in what you say in the classroom. It is not what you teach, but how you teach that matters. In one town, in the late '20's a young man failed to receive his contract for the following year because he had discussed evolution in his classes. In the same

school, a few years later, a young woman, socialist-minded enough to seem like a Red to these conservative individuals, received only friendly teasing on her political opinions from these identical people who had favored discharging the man. Why? The man was superciliously intellectual. He found a certain pleasure in startling others with less formal education than he. The woman had an inquiring mind, always ready to respect the opinions of others.—LUCILLE GALE in *Michigan Education Journal*.

### *Classroom Trick*

Admitted ignorance about certain subjects can be an asset in the schoolroom. No student minds quite so much listening to an explanation of the Malthusian theory, if he knows that he is going to help the expounder improve his backhand stroke as soon as school is out that afternoon.—LUCRETIA MONEY in *Mississippi Educational Advance*.



# SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

Edited by THE STAFF

**NEWARK:** The school people of Newark, N.J., have been going seriously about the business of preparing for any war emergency, from blackout to evacuation. Newark's 2,600 teachers are all potential members of the School Committee on Defense Services, says Supt. Stanley H. Rolfe in *New Jersey Educational Review*. This summer 101 Newark teachers worked on plans for the committee. Safety of school children in air raids or other war emergencies is the No. 1 problem. Schools will experiment with various types of dismissal drills. School buildings will be surveyed to determine their safest areas. A first-aid corps is being developed in every school. Foregoing plans are in the hands of a sub-committee on emergencies, which also surveyed and catalogued the useful skills of all school employes. Other sub-committees are:

**Physical Well Being:** In charge of expanding school nutritional services to increase physical fitness; emergency meals; safety.

**Democracy:** Greater emphasis in instruction and practice.

**Pan-American:** preparation of hemisphere good will materials for all grade levels.

**Evacuation:** Surveys and plans will be made, although experience of British throws doubt on desirability of actual evacuation.

**School Camps:** Surveys and plans for establishment of pupils in rural camps during emergencies.

**Post War:** Study of steps that Newark schools might take to meet post-war conditions.

**Other activities of Newark teachers:** A recreation committee provides leisure pursuits for service men. Teachers assisted in a census of housing available for new defense workers. During Newark's practice blackout, its streets were patrolled by teacher-trained air-raid wardens.

**COLLAPSE:** Education in the France of Vichy is going to be different. Elementary-school graduates will be denied further education unless they can pass tests designed to eliminate the "unfit", reports the *New York Times*. High-school pupils will pay tuition. There will be different curriculums for boys and for girls, and that will about end co-education. Oh, yes—there's going to be a lot of singing in school. Singing will "play a large part in the new order".

**PAN-AMERICA:** Steps for high schools to take in the hemisphere-unity phase of defense, recommended by the Committees on Inter-American Re-

lations (of the Dept. of Secondary Teachers, NEA): Have a Pan-American Club. Offer courses or units on the history of Latin-America, and on the relations between the United States and the other Americas. In history, music, and art courses, bring in the contributions of Latin-America to these fields. The Committee has published a manual for faculty sponsors of Pan-American clubs, "The Pan American Club and Its Activities", and circulars on other phases of the program. Write to Joshua Hochstein, Chairman, Committee on Inter-American Relations, Dept. of Secondary Teachers, NEA, 800 East Gun Hill Road, New York, N.Y.

**RISING PRICES:** Some of the school systems in Wisconsin have already done something about the problem of rising prices, rising taxes, and teachers' salaries, reports the *Wisconsin Journal of Education*. In some communities, all teachers will be given a flat bonus payable at the end of the year (\$50 each in one town). In other systems, flat monthly increases have been made (of from \$5 in one town to \$12.50 in another). Other communities have made flat increases in per cent of present salaries, ranging from 4% to 8%. Some school boards are still wondering how to meet the situation.

**PROPAGANDA:** The Institute for Propaganda Analysis has suspended its operations for an indefinite length of time. Publication of the monthly bulletin, *Propaganda Analysis*, ceased with the fall 1941 issues.

**PEDEGUESE:** That "Dictionary of Education" is coming along, reports its sponsor, *Phi Delta Kappa*. There will be about 20,000 definitions, averaging 50 words each. Some 150 coordinators or specialists have been analyzing word lists and editing definitions submitted. About 70 committees representing national professional organizations will review the edited definitions. The manuscript should be completed and forwarded to the publisher sometime in the summer of 1942.

**QUESTION:** Plans for student forums on "What Should the United States Do in the Present World Crisis" have been made by the high-school division of the board of education of New York City, reports *The New York Teacher News*. Both isolationist and interventionist viewpoints will be presented.

(Continued on page 256)

## ➤ EDITORIAL ➤

### High Schools in War

FOR MONTHS our high schools have been fulfilling their roles in the program of national defense. Now that we are at war, high schools everywhere are swinging their emphasis to victory.

Every loyal American will applaud this effort. For once, we know that we can work a reform that will receive almost universal support. The boys and girls in our high schools can carry important responsibilities in a war economy. And should the war be prolonged, as indeed it may be, these same boys and girls will carry heavy responsibilities and risks in the active belligerency of the nation.

It is today the purpose of every American institution to redirect its energies, if that be necessary, toward winning this conflict. The school must be willing to sacrifice many of its customary modes of procedure for the common good. The immediate concern of America's schools is to work for victory.

However, even as the war news pours in and the casualty lists grow, it seems that many citizens still fail to realize what is happening. Many seem to feel that the war is remote in time and space. However, we are at war! The high schools can help to make this clear to our people, too many of whom still expect to do "business as usual". We remember how the people of England believed that they were in a phony war. We must not make that mistake. Americans must realize at once that only an all-out effort can reduce future casualties and hardships. The schools can help to awaken America.

America can take it, and when we finally strike our stride we can pass it out. In the meantime there is yeoman's service to be rendered by all of us.

The planning in the days of defense preparation has given us something of an insight into the work we should do, now

that we are at war. However, it will never do for us to assume that our plans, once made, will serve us in all situations. As the war develops we shall have to adapt our plans to the immediate emergency needs. Any suggestions we make today may be entirely outmoded in the near future.

There are many problems of national warfare and many problems of civilian defense with which teachers and pupils will be concerned. Chief among the problems of national warfare, as far as the schools are concerned, is that of training mechanics. High schools everywhere have swung into line and their accomplishments are worthy of genuine praise. Many young people, and adults too, have received vocational training in our shops. But much more must be done. Trained men and machines can win the war. The schools can prepare trained men.

No less important than actual warfare is the problem of civilian training for the rigors of war. If we don't assume this responsibility with efficiency and intelligence we just can't expect to have adequate financial support for education during the war emergency. It is believed, however, that patriotic citizens will support the secondary school as a war measure if they observe that the school takes a position of leadership in community welfare. Hundreds of high schools are responding with alacrity, and they are finding that community leadership is readily placed in their hands. And it is right that the heart of the community at war should be the high school itself.

Of course, we have not had word from all American high schools or even from a large per cent of them, but more reports are coming in daily. Those who have communicated with us indicate that they are centering their attention on the following areas:

1. *Citizenship Training.* It was noted in

England that juvenile delinquency increased manyfold when hostilities began. War conditions always place stresses on young people. Stealing, rioting, sex offenses, and general lawlessness were common manifestations of the breakdown of social control. We can prevent much of this from happening over here if we provide practical experiences in self control and gradually enlarge the scope of personal and group responsibility. Kindergarten methods of high-school control should give way to thoughtful self-direction on the part of secondary-school pupils. They must learn the ways of democracy by experiencing democracy in action.

2. *Panic Control.* Where there are likely to be bombings, even of a token nature, care must be exercised to prevent panic. Schools can lead off with drills and exercises that will habituate young people in actions that will prevent disaster should emergencies arise. The same precautions should be taken in any areas subject to sabotage or alarming rumors, which, of course, include all our schools.

It is suggested that every high school establish an information center where pupils and teachers, and even parents, may go at any time for the latest authentic news. The very existence of such an information center, reliably and efficiently operated, may do much to reduce the probability of panics.

Some schools may wish to evacuate children to their homes in case of air alarms or actual bombings, but many schools probably will retain the pupils in the buildings until the "all clear" signal is sounded. Each school will work out this problem with the cooperation of the local defense council.

3. *Building Morale.* It is logical to expect the schools to plan a program for the support of community morale. No group is better equipped than the high school to provide entertainment for all community groups—civilian and military. Public forums are proving valuable media for building morale. Bulletins are available for the guidance of forum directors. Forums are being

organized by the schools for adults as well as for pupils.

Useful activities that have a good effect on morale are the production of supplies such as knitted apparel, and the collection of aluminum, tin, old papers, and magazines. Morale building also are activities that have to do with community defense, such as fire-warden or airplane-detector service.

4. *Health.* High schools are seriously tackling the problems of the cost of living, the planning of balanced meals, the utilization of substitutes, and the improvement of unsatisfactory housing, unsatisfactory medical service, unsatisfactory community hygiene. These problems are no longer limited to study in textbooks—they are not make believe. They are serious and important practical challenges.

5. *Safety.* Blackouts always create safety hazards. So also does the assignment of inexperienced workers to new and intricate jobs. These hazards must be expected in wartime. War itself connotes danger. The schools will find this a fertile field if they give expert attention to problems of safety.

Many schools are offering courses and clinics in first aid. Fire-warden training is also a part of the school program in many communities.

6. *Thrift.* Personal budgeting, reclamation of products usually wasted, wise buying—all of these and other units will occupy many schools throughout the war emergency.

7. *Pan Americanism.* The other American nations are more real to us today than ever before in our history. We have known that there is a Canada, and a Mexico, and a Central and South America, but they have existed as hazy and far-away entities. Today high schools are helping our people to get acquainted with these neighbors. As we are able to win their friendship, we shall thus strengthen hemisphere solidarity.

7. *School Camps.* Many teachers and administrators have envisioned a day when there will be a school camp connected with

every school, even in rural areas. The war has revived a hope that this ideal may soon be reached, especially by urban schools near the exposed seaboard. The entire problem of the evacuation of pupils from populous centers has been approached by some schools with the suggestion that school camps be established.

8. *Post-war Education.* As we strike our stride, more and more schools will give attention to the program of education we may reasonably expect in the post-war world. But at present the immediate concern of America's schools is to work for victory.

Undoubtedly, there are many other areas

that should be mentioned—areas in which your school is doing important work. If you will write to us about your plans for contributing to the war effort we shall pass on these ideas to the extent of our resources.

Let us go quietly and efficiently about the business of awakening America to the trying task ahead. And as America awakes let us make certain that our young people are prepared to carry the burden of war. This is our war—our young men and young women with our help and guidance can do much to bring victory.

FORREST E. LONG, *Editor*



## Hitler As Educational Leader

A dispatch from Vichy under date of September 1, 1941, appeared recently in the *New York Herald-Tribune*, announcing certain educational "reforms". Jerome Carcopino, Secretary of State for Education in this pathetic Nazi-dominated ruin, is quoted as denouncing free high schools as a "disastrous myth of the demagogic legislators", and as complaining that such institutions have been unbearably crowded by "the children of the poor". Also, says he, they "enabled the well-to-do, who could afford to pay, to get a secondary-school training for their youngsters at the expense of the state".

Here we have an unequivocal denunciation of the central principle of American Public Education—a European reversal of the Kalamazoo Decision. It is extremely interesting in the light of the fact that we know so well the purposes the Nazis have in mind. Hitler, Goering, and Co. do not want to be bothered with a free-thinking, self-reliant constituency. Better to their liking is an ignorant, docile population, satisfied with simple things and under control when needed. The whole pronouncement serves to illuminate the point of view

of persons or groups in any country who seek to scuttle or cripple a system of universal secondary education.

A prominent feature of the reforms is that "A leading place is to be given to the teaching of the classics and the humanities—the teaching of Latin and Greek". More attention is to be given to physical education; and girls are to get a different education than boys.

So Hitler takes the educational system of France back to the eighteenth century for a revival of the Latin Grammar School. Where it is to go from there remains to be seen; for advice on this point we might refer Adolf to some of our own esteemed countrymen who have been thinking along that line.

This particular decree on the subject of education illustrates the sociological principle that a man or a people must go either forward or backward. Humanity is toiling upward on an incline; once it loses its feet, it skids backward toward its origin. Furthermore, the decree unmistakably dramatized President Roosevelt's bon mot: "The 'New Order' is neither new, nor is it an order."

H. H. R.



## ➤ SCHOOL LAW REVIEW ➤

# The Supt. Can't Do That to You

By DANIEL R. HODGDON

NOT INFREQUENTLY do superintendents and boards of education stoop to the vicious practice of informing teachers on the very last week or day of the school term or year that they are not to be reemployed for another year. This practice has been and should be severely condemned. No fair-minded man would resort to a practice which leaves a teacher in a position where it is extremely difficult to obtain employment in his profession.

Some of the more progressive states have corrected this abuse and made it a condition that unless a teacher is notified otherwise within 90 days of the expiration of the school year, he will be deemed reemployed without further action on the part of the board of education. In Alabama the board must give a teacher not on tenure a notice in writing of termination of employment on or before the first day of May, and if the teacher does not wish to remain in the service of the board for another period he must notify the board by June 1.

Where a board has been given the power to notify the teacher, a notice by the superintendent will not constitute proper notice, for the board has no right to delegate this ministerial duty to the superintendent of schools or to ratify the act of the superintendent in notifying the teachers. Of course this follows one of the general principles of law that every superintendent should know.

One of the most absurd and probably stupid philosophies about our educational practice is the training of teachers and administrators in every philosophy of education except the philosophy of the law governing educational practices. Few administrators are at all acquainted with the fundamental principles of common law that govern the business of conducting school. Bankers, doctors and other professional men are required to know the legal background of their professions, but educators lack even an elementary background.

After all the law and the courts are final judges of all our educational theory and practice. The educator can have all the vagaries he may desire, but the law tells him how far he can go.

No administrator should attempt to assume a power specifically given to a board of education. An act done by a school administrator in behalf of a board without authority by statute is by positive law or public policy illegal and void. Such acts are

not subject to ratification by a board of education, nor may the board delegate its authority to a superintendent. A duty involving a delicate exercise of wise discretion is non-delegable, and the attempt to delegate such authority is a nullity.

All teachers notified by the superintendent and dismissed must be considered reemployed and entitled to their salaries. *Board of Education of Marshall County v Baugh et al* 240 (Ala.) 391, 199 So. 822 (January 16, 1941).

### A Lot's in a Name

A teacher usually obtains the status of tenure by serving a probationary period. During the probationary period one must serve in name in a single capacity, as teacher, or principal, or supervisor, etc. If one serves in more than one capacity he obtains no right to tenure.

A teacher served as a head teacher for one year, as an assistant principal two years, and as a principal for two years—five years of service in all. The probationary period was three years. The teacher had exactly the same duties for all five years—in reality the teacher performed all the functions and duties of a principal. The court said it wasn't what the teacher did but what the contract of employment called the teacher that counted—therefore no tenure status could be acquired until a teacher was called by a certain title for three years.

The presiding judge of the learned court took exception to this apparent nonsense. "The majority opinion of the court," said the chief justice, "disregards the admitted facts and permits the mere form of the transaction to control the substance."

Abraham Lincoln once asked an opposing attorney whether he had seen a cow with five legs. "No," replied the lawyer.

"Well," said Lincoln, "suppose we call the cow's tail a leg. How many legs would the cow have?"

"Five," the lawyer answered.

"You're wrong," said Lincoln, "no matter what you call the tail it will never be a leg."

So no matter what you call a principal he will always be the same pedagogical entity, regardless of legal ambiguity. *Constantine v Board of Education of San Francisco et al* (Cal.) 111 Pac. (2d), 698, (March 31, 1941).

## BOOK REVIEWS

JOHN CARR DUFF and PHILIP W. L. COX, *Review Editors*

*The Educational Philosophy of National Socialism*, by GEORGE F. KNELLER. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941. 290 pages, \$3.50.

Millions of youths, and adults, too, in Germany and in German-dominated lands are being educated in conformity with a revolutionary social-educational philosophy. It is very important, as the author of this scholarly book points out, that intelligent people endeavor to understand what it is that the National-Socialist theorists are driving at. If everything about the program is bad for the societies that are using it, wholesale condemnation may be justified. If the practices are reasonable for these societies but are unfitted for those peoples who are still oriented in terms of democracy, there may develop criteria by which to evaluate institutions, procedures, and contents in liberal societies. In any case, however, accurate knowledge and calm ratiocination are mandatory.

In this volume, Dr. Kneller presents the information necessary for such reflective thinking—the ideas of the educators, philosophers, and National-Socialist party men. He notes their conflicts, contradictions, and complexities. But he clearly pictures the fundamental astuteness and thoroughness and efficiency with which the resulting program is executed. Even though Nazi Germany shall lose the war, the stereotypes and myths and behavior characteristics of this program will surely survive the defeat. Unless they are taken account of, they will remain to plague all efforts to establish a Europe as a world in which liberals desire to live.

The author devotes four chapters to explaining the situation in Europe, the social-political activities that grew up in response to it, and the concepts and re-directed myths that served as an ideological background for the program. The next four chapters deal with the application of the educational pattern in schools and universities, in the extra-school organizations, and in the customs and prestige of social life. Finally he summarizes the sources and applications of German thought and traditions, and shows how many of them are integrated into the rather simple and straightforward, albeit revolutionary and dangerous, ideology of the National Socialists.

For all who would restrain themselves from going off half-cocked on the question of German education, this volume is a "must" book.

P. W. L. C.

*Chile, Land of Progress*, by EARL P. HANSON. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock, 1941. 190 pages, \$1.75.

In this brief volume the author presents a very sympathetic and optimistic survey of the present Chilean peoples and government. He does not slur over the economic problems that they face nor does he entirely discount the many and heterogeneous influences that hamper the present leaders in their program of progress. But one would scarcely guess, from a perusal of this book, how recently, indeed how contemporaneously, the forces of special interests have conflicted with resultant disorder, violence, and bitter cruelty.

It is true, as the writer emphasizes, that both in the past and in the present the political leaders have often been patient, cautious, and foresighted; but it is equally true that from 1920 till 1938, Chile faced one crisis after another. Only since the election of Pedro Aguirre Cerda as President have comparative tranquility and stability emerged.

Nevertheless, this is a true and wholesome book. It gives a generous but positive and accurate picture of Chile's "new deal". It shows Chile in what we all hope is a true transition, endeavoring to solve its own problems not merely in terms of the moment but also for the decades ahead. And the facts that it presents regarding the origin and present status of much of the orderly planning and actual accomplishments in this land of poverty and guts should be inspiring for citizens of our own land whose readily available wealth, technology, and general popular enlightenment make our problems so relatively easily solved.

*Good Neighbors: Argentina, Brazil, Chile, and Seventeen Other Countries*, by HUBERT HERRING. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1941. 360 pages, \$3.

As an effective antidote for all who believe that the defense of the Americas against totalitarianism and the collapse of democracy depends on a military might sufficient to defeat the armed invasion of Hitler's legions, this book is prescribed medicine. Perhaps a reflective reading of Herring's sympathetic, skeptical, and sharp presentation of the problems and conflicts in Latin American countries may even aid us to appreciate how much more than material, ships, and trained fighters our own country needs for the safety and further development of our own democratically oriented national life.

In this well written, excellently organized, comprehensive, critical, and incisive book, Herring helps "Americans North . . . to know exactly who are these good neighbors for whom we are about to bare our breasts and armor plate—what they eat, think, and propose to do—what sort of men rule over them—whether they plan to play with us or with the foe—when and if that foe appears." He cannot answer all of these questions, of course; but he can point several challenging morals.

For all the countries south of us the threat or the actuality of dictatorship is present. If our national and private financial support is used to support present or aspiring forces of repression and exploitation, we may possibly secure more material and military aid in our armed defense of this hemisphere than we would if we use our resources to encourage those parties and persons who seek to foster conditions of secure living, liberty, and potential, positive happiness in these diverse lands.

But if we do so seek the concrete and "realistic" partnership of potentates and privilege we shall disillusion the millions who look to us and especially to our symbol, Franklin D. Roosevelt, for encouragement and help; thus we shall destroy the spiritual and human instruments without which democratic aims and practices must perish in the new world.

And our present program of "good neighborliness" is most ambiguous in this regard. This book is not to be missed by any thinking American.

P. W. L. C.

*The Development of Hispanic America*, by A. CURTIS WILGUS. New York: Farrar & Rinehart, 1941. 912 pages, \$4.75.

This comprehensive volume has been prepared by Professor Wilgus for the use of college students. The author compares his task with that of writing a history of the collective states of Europe; but he understates the hugeness of his own problem. For never has there been a political, economic, cultural dominance by any one state of Latin America which would furnish perspective for an understanding of the whole—as, in the case of Europe, the France of Louis XIV and of Bonaparte, the Germany of Bismark and of Hitler, and the Britain of Elizabeth and of Victoria.

To be sure, Spanish (and Portuguese) mercantilism and Catholicism, the aspirations and acts of Bolivar, Miranda, Sucre, San Martin, and O'Higgins, the general domination of land holders and church, and in recent times the popular hostility to *Yanqui Imperialismo* might be used as unifying and organizing motifs. But for the most part, each of the twenty states has its own history, its own internal problems and machinations, its own con-

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fused and fleeting dominations, by parties, classes, institutions, sections, fragments, and individuals, which when taken in the gross are almost endlessly bewildering.

In the first four sections of his book, the author does give the reader some systematic comparative treatment of the backgrounds, the discovery, exploration, and conquest, the colonial development, and the revolutions for independence of Hispanic America. In his treatment of the development of the modern states, however, he stuffs and jams incidents and names and movements into over three hundred pages of unselective detail. Perhaps he has found that so many thousands of specific facts must be mentioned, lest he be accused of elisions and omissions, that his breathless paragraphs of historical recital are inevitable. And he must be credited with seven concluding chapters that attempt to furnish a more revealing and orderly picture of present orientations of politics, life, and international relations.

The text as a whole, especially Appendix C, "Bibliographical Essay", should furnish an encyclopaedic source of information for students. But the college instructor will have his work cut out for himself to furnish perspective and organization.

P. W. L. C.

*Moments of Enchantment*, by Students of the Junior High Schools of the City of New York. New York: Junior High School Principals Association, 1941. 72 pages.

*"Am I a stoker of dead yesterdays  
About whom cling the cellar damp of age?  
Or am I youth's own soul, whose winged ways  
Lead on toward heights above this mortal stage?  
I wish I knew. . ."*

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*The School and the Present Emergency*, by Nine Members of the Faculty of Evander Childs High School, City of New York. 46 pages, mimeographed.

The faculty bulletins of Evander Childs High School (of which the one here reviewed is Vol. 5, No. 2) are always of much value. *The School and the Present Emergency* is peculiarly timely because it gives concrete evidence that this school is poignantly conscious of the challenge and the oppor-

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*Functional Health Teaching Syllabus*, by LYND A. M. WEBER. Boston: Ginn and Company, 1941. 165 pages, \$1.75.

This syllabus reports an experiment directed by the North Central Association in nine cooperating high schools. Part I surveys the objectives and procedures of the experiment, while a tentative outline of the course is given in Part II, and nine suggested units are exhibited. The material on each unit includes a general outline for the instructor, stressing purposes, general conceptions, main principles and a general subject-matter outline with sample pupil-activity problems and "attitudes to be worked for". Each unit concludes with an excellent bibliography of source materials, annotated to indicate whether the reference is suitable for beginning pupils, advanced pupils, or teachers.

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VERNON C. LINGREN

*Education and the Boy Scout Movement in America*, by EDWIN NICHOLSON. New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1940. 117 pages, \$1.60.

First and last, the Boy Scouts' character-building and citizen-training programs have been the subject of many articles, pamphlets, and investigations. In the present volume Nicholson approaches the problem by means of a critical analysis of the social and educational foundations of these programs. The justification for such a reexamination is found in the period of rapid changes in the cultural patterns and values which might tend to invalidate some accepted presuppositions and indicate the need for new assumptions and hypotheses.

On the whole, the author is generally satisfied with the Scout programs. His reservations have to do, first, with the low level of intellectualization of the oath and law, the codes and practices which

are inculcated by emotionalized ritual and heroic practice, and, second, with the essentially individualistic therapy and regeneration which makes so little contribution to the solution of problems that are so primarily social in character as to require fundamental institutional changes for the amelioration of conditions.

Two responsibilities he assigns to the Boy Scout program makers: "... a reexamination of these foundational concepts in the light of modern psychology and educational opinion, and also in the light of changed conditions of American industrial civilization. The second responsibility of the Boy Scout movement is to make those changes in organization, in curriculum, in subject matter, and in methods of teaching that will more adequately meet the moral and social needs of a dynamic world and a dynamic society."

*Youth, Family, and Education*, by JOSEPH K. FOLSOM. Washington, D.C.: American Council on Education, 1941. 299 pages, \$1.75.

Dr. Folsom, professor of sociology at Vassar College and chairman of the National Council of Parent Education, prepared this volume for the American Youth Commission. With the Nineteenth

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Yearbook of the American Association of School Administrators and the volume of the Society for Curriculum Study and the Department of Home Economics of the NEA, this study contributes much to the development of a program of education for family living.

The first four chapters of this volume present the viewpoint of the sociologist toward education, the home, and education for family life. He points out that educators and students of society are now thinking in terms of life objectives to be gained rather than subject matter to be taught. Among these life objectives none is more important than that of improving family life.

The next three chapters describe present-day practices and problems in nursery school and elementary school (this section prepared by Winifred Bain and Ellen Miller), in high schools and in colleges. Actual school programs are described and evaluated. While many of the educational offerings seem to be good, too few of the pupils in American schools receive any significant education for family living.

Chapters eight to thirteen describe education for family life outside the school. Programs of social group work, family case work, community and state coordinating agencies, and national programs are described and evaluated. Further steps which are necessary to strengthen the program are suggested.

The last chapter summarizes the conclusions and recommendations in all the areas referred to. Appendices list organizations and publications which contribute to education for family life. A rather adequate bibliography is given.

There is surprisingly little overlapping between this volume and the two referred to in the first paragraph of this review. This study is more inclusive than the others, in that it touches on all the major agencies which deal with the family. The school man will feel that it underemphasizes the role of the school and overemphasizes sex education. Dr. Folsom may be correct in his emphasis. But a reading of the other volumes will give the impression of a total picture of family education through all major agencies of education. This volume is a "must" assignment, and should probably precede a study of the others referred to. J. C. A.

*Story of Nations*, by LESTER B. ROGERS, FAY ADAMS, and WALKER BROWN. New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1940. xi + 761 pages, \$2.28.

This popular survey of world history appears in a revised and enlarged edition. The events are brought down to the opening of the present war, and three chapters have been added on Mexico and Latin America.

J. C. A.

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II. The Editorial Committee of the above publications is W. D. Reeve of Teachers College, Columbia University, New York, Editor-in-Chief; Dr. Vera Sanford, of the State Normal School, Oneonta, N.Y.; and W. S. Schlauch of the School of Commerce, New York University.

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## SCHOOL NEWS DIGEST

(Continued from page 241)

**NEGRO:** Negro History Week, February 8 to 15, is sponsored by the Association for the Study of Negro Life and History. Teachers may obtain posters and other materials free by writing to C. G. Woodson, 1538 Ninth St., N.W., Washington, D.C. Among the Negro's contributions to civilization, states Mr. Woodson, are the development of music by stringed instruments, domestication of animals, advances in the fine arts, and the discovery of iron.

**GIFT:** Defense Bonds have been voted as the Senior gift to the school at Tilden High School, New York City.

**JUNIOR HIGH:** The 18th annual Junior-High-School Conference will be held at the School of Education, New York University, on March 13 and 14, 1942. Theme: "For a Better America: Education for a more immediate and effective democratic participation in the solution of our problems". A "Charter of Democracy for Junior High Schools" will be presented at a final session, for discussion.

**CALL:** Teachers are being invited to volunteer for the School and College Civilian Morale Service which is to be organized by the U. S. Office of

Education. A manual on "How to Participate" is probably in the hands of every high-school principal and superintendent by the time you read this. The idea is to "double and treble" forums and discussion groups in every community. These "Freedom's Forums" can be conducted in schools, union halls, churches, women's and service clubs, libraries, and farm organization meetings.

**COLOSSAL:** A whopper of a pageant-play dramatizing the battle for democracy from 403 B.C. to 1941 is being staged by the New York City public schools on December 15, coinciding with national celebration of the Bill of Rights. Talent and off-stage workers have been drawn from most of the high schools in the city system: there will be 1,000 pupils in the cast, another 250 in the choral group, and 100 in the orchestra. The vocational schools supplied costumes and stage effects: the girls made 800 costumes, while shop pupils were busy on construction of the sets. The 5 episodes: domination of Athens by militaristic Sparta; Savonarola's attempt to win freedom for his people from Lorenzo the Magnificent of Florence; struggle between Charles I and his Parliament; struggle of American patriots against appeasers and Tories, ending with the Declaration of Independence; and the rise of a strong, united America facing the world crisis.

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